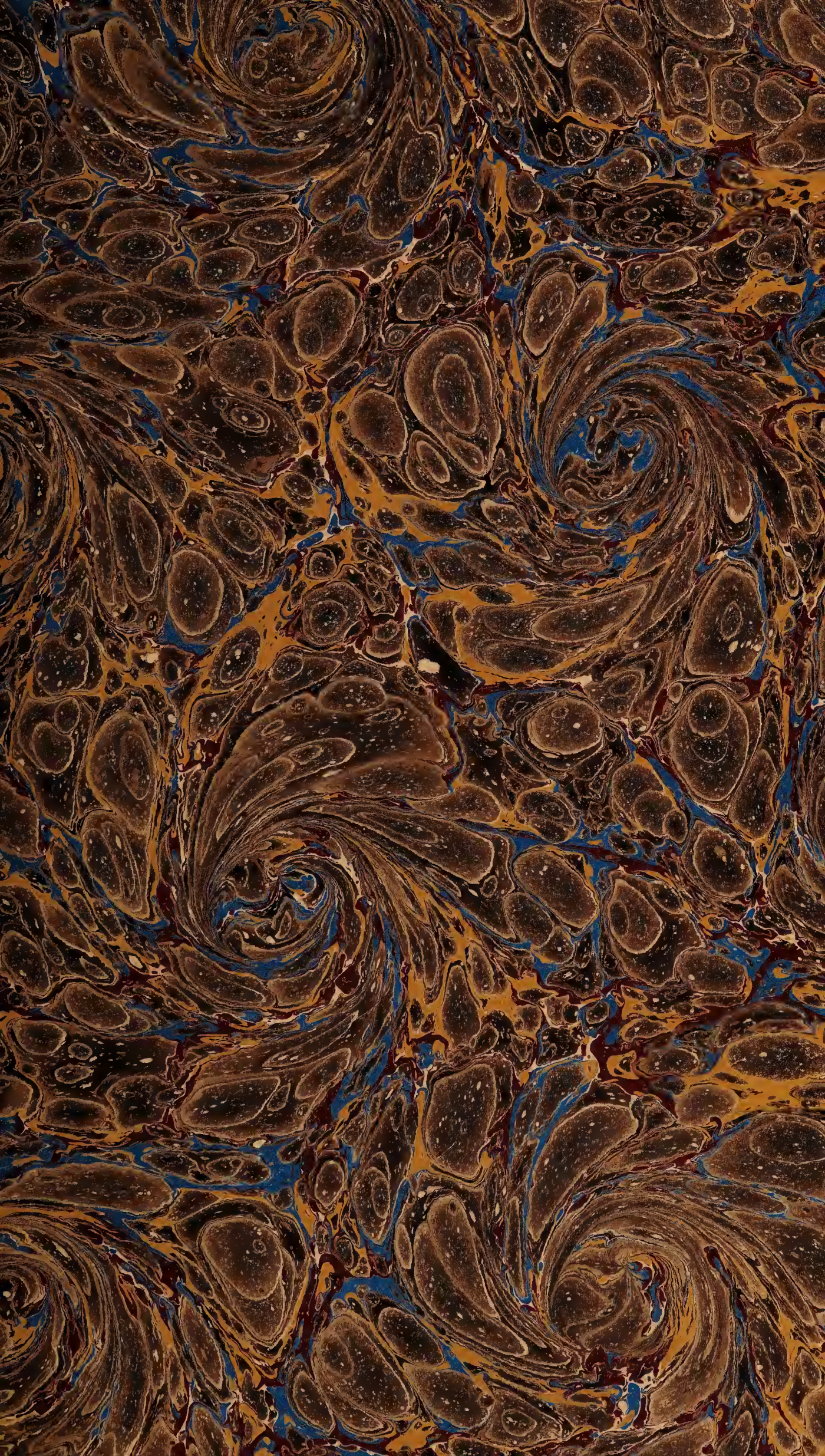




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A

JOURNEY

THROUGH

RUSSIA

INTO

PERSIA;

BY TWO

English GENTLEMEN,

Who went in the Year 1739,

From *Petersburg*, in order to make
a Discovery how the Trade from *Great*
Britain might be carried on from *Astra-*
can over the *Caspian*.

To which is annex'd,

A summary Account of the *Rise* of the
famous *KOULI KAN*, and his *Successes*,
till he seated himself on the *Persian* Throne.

L O N D O N :

Printed for R. DODSLEY, at *Tully's* Head in
Pall-Mall; and Sold by T. COOPER, at the
Globe in *Pater-noster Row*. 1742.

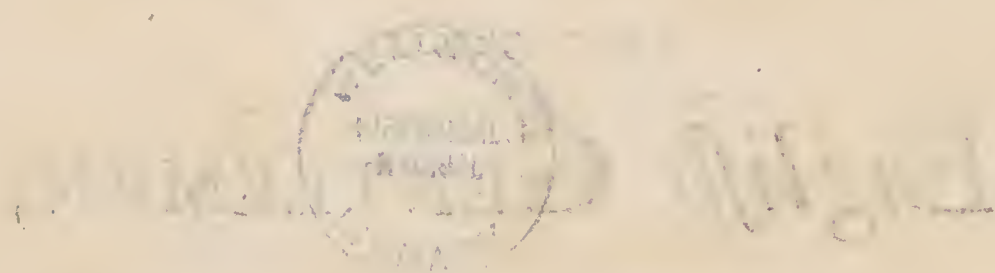
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1880

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T O

Sir John Thompson,

Governor of the *Russia* Company,

THIS

LITTLE TREATISE

Is most humbly inscrib'd,

A S A

TESTIMONY

Of his many

VIRTUES;

Particularly of his known

BENEVOLENCE,

And ready Disposition to promote a

PUBLICK GOOD,

Manifest in his Assiduity in procuring

An Act to open a Trade to *Persia*

Through the

Russian Dominions,

BY HIS

Most Humble Servant,

James Spilman.

St. John's Evangelical

Church of the Holy Spirit

and

Free Will Contribution

for the support of the

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A
JOURNEY
FROM
MOSCO to *MESHED*,
The New CAPITAL of
PERSIA.



WE left *Mosco* the 14th of *March* 1738--9, and travell'd to *Muram*, a City which stands on the North Bank of the River *Occa*, about 240 * *Versts* distance. This River is very considerable, and falls into the River *Volga* at *Nisna-Novogorod*, and our Road lay cross it. The Ice stood fast, but was full of Holes, rotten and dangerous; but it being then a hard Frost, clear and Moon-light, at Midnight we ventured to cross it, and got safe over. From hence we pro-

* A *Verst* is about three quarters of a Mile *English*.

ceeded about 160 Versts farther to the City of *Assamas* ; here we found the Rivulets much swelled with the melting of the Snow, and the Ice in them broken up, that we could not continue our Journey any farther, till the Waters abated, and that we might conveniently travel with Waggon, which we had a good Opportunity to provide ourselves with. The latter part of our Journey proved as tedious to ourselves as it was heavy for our Horses, being frequently obliged to quit the main Road, and go far round about on account of the Overflowing of the small Rivers ; two of our Horses died with the Fatigue, and the rest were much harra's'd. We arrived at *Assamas* the 21st, and took up our Quarters in an adjacent Village the 4th of *April* ; we provided ourselves with Waggon and fresh Carriers, and finding the Waters pretty well drain'd off the Land, we departed for *Saratoff*. Travelling began to be pleasant as our Course was to the S. E. and as the Summer advanced, the Roads every Day grew better on the *Step*, or Wilderness, where we found great Plenty of wild Ducks, Snipes, Heathcocks, and other Birds, that we shot more than enough to supply us, and lived wholly on Game. At this time there was no Grass on the *Step*, that we were forced to carry Hay and Corn with us for our Horses, during our four Days travelling over it ; and should have found it very agreeable, but that one or other of us were obliged to be continually on the Watch, for fear of being surprized. At about 20 Versts distance from each other, through the *Step*, are certain Houses called *Zaimoira's*, built for the Accommodation of Travellers in Winter. At these Places we

were

were forced to take up our Lodging, on account of Water, which in other Places was scarce. These *Zamoira's* are as good a Harbour for Rogues, as others, which obliged us to be more than ordinary on our Guard ; neither could we put any great Confidence in our Waggoners. We had two *Rufs* Servants, and we were two, that we divided ourselves in the Night into two Watches, and this Method we continued all the way down the *Volga*.

The 15th of *April* we arrived at the City of *Saratoff*, about Noon, and waited on the *Voyavode*, or Governor. We found great Difficulty to get us Quarters, the Town having been burnt about a Year before. The Company of *Armenians*, whom we were in great Hopes to have found here, had sailed from hence two Days before, so that we had no other Chance but to proceed down the *Volga* by ourselves. What distressed us most was to get a Passage, for we could find none but large Boats or Vessels, which were bound down the *Volga* with Meal, which might probably be a Month in their Passage to *Astracan* ; the large * *Lotka's*, or *Canoe's*, which used to be here in great Numbers, were gone on the *Sturgeon* Fishery, and the few that remained were all fitting out on the same Design, and were not to be hired or purchased on any Terms ; so that we were at the greatest Loss imaginable how to get to *Astracan* time enough to secure our Passage cross the *Caspian* in the same Vessel with the *Armenians*.

* *Lotka*, a small Boat sow'd together with Willow. *Canoe*, a Boat cut out of a solid Tree.

This being of great Consequence, in order to effect it, we determined to proceed in such a Boat as we could get, if she was but large enough to carry our Goods; but our Inquiry was in vain, they were one and all engaged for the *Fishery*. While we were in this Dilemma, a Vessel arrived with Passengers from *Samahra*, and we were informed that there was a spare *Lotka* belonging to her; we immediately went to see it, and finding it might do in the Emergency we were in, and there being no other to be had, we bought her for three* Rubles and an half. She being old and leaky, it required two Days to let her dry e're we could trim her, and new *pay* her Bottom; in the mean Time we provided her with Mast and Sails, and shipped five Hands to go with us to *Astracan*. The third Day, she being fitted and ready, we put our Goods on board her, for then we found Room enough, and for some part of our Baggage and Provisions; but the far greatest Part of the latter we were forced to leave behind, to be sent after us the first Opportunity; and we found just room for four Oars, and two of us to sit in the † *Stern-sheats*. But the worst was, when we all got into the Boat, being now ten in Number, she swam so deep that we were in great Doubt with ourselves whether to proceed in her or not; but being urged by Necessity, knowing the singular Advantage it would be to us, if possible, to join those *Armenians* that were before us, so as to be able to cross the *Caspian* in the same Vessel with them, (otherwise missing that Opportunity we might lose half the Sum-

* A Ruble is 1 s. 6 d.

† Stern.

mer before another Vessel failed for *Rasbd*, and that arriving there late in the Summer might probably occasion us to winter in *Gilan*, which would be a Twelve-month's loss of time) on using the utmost Caution, we found the Boat might carry us down safely, we resolved to proceed with her. On the Security of our little Cargo, our Experiment in *Persia*, and all our Hopes that way depended ; for to arrive at *Astracan* with our Goods damaged, was in effect not to arrive there at all. These Difficulties made us in a Manner forget the Danger of *Pirates*, which we were informed might fall in our way about *Zolotova*. One of us had been at this Inlet before, and knew it to be a very likely Place to harbour Villains ; but as we had Arms more than sufficient, and we heard that these Rogues were, as yet, unprovided with them, we did not doubt but to make our Party good in case they should attack us.

The 20th of *April* we cast off and left *Sarabtoff* : We were detain'd some Hours every Day by contrary Winds, which blew fresh ; this obliged us to go very near the Entrance of *Zolotova* Inlet, which else we did not intend. We had scarce open'd this Inlet, e'er we came on a sudden in sight of at least forty People, who were within Pistol-shot of us on the Bank, and by them was five or six large Boats. We instantly stood to our Arms, and asked them who they were, and where they were going. They answer'd, they belong'd to *Nesna Novogorod*, and were going down to *Astracan*. We rowed down about a Mile lower, and went ashore ; but before we had got out of the Boat, one of their Boats put off and came directly down to us,
and

and hover'd some time about us ; but we kept our People to the Boat with their Arms ready. She held on her Way down the *Volga* ; we tarried about an Hour to refresh ourselves, and then it being calm we continu'd on our Way. About Midnight one of their Boats came again up pretty close to us, but on our calling to her she kept off. Soon after came the rest of their Boats in sight ; but on our calling and threatening to fire into them if they came any nearer, they thought fit to *sheer* off. If these were Villains, they seeing us well provided with Arms, and always on our Guard, they durst not venture to attack us. We thought they might be *Boerlacks*, or Labourers going down to *Astracan* ; but as we were forewarn'd, it would not have been Prudence for us to trust them, especially as we had heard these Fellows, when they have an Opportunity, do most of the Mischief that is done on the *Volga*. Several such sort of Alarms we had before we reach'd *Astracan*, sometimes occasioned by the *Russians*, sometimes by the *Calmucks* ; (which with contrary Winds, and our Boat's being so deep, both of which oblig'd us often to make fast to the Shore ; which, if we had been in a larger Boat and more Oars, we could have prevented and held on our Way ;) it was a Fortnight e'er we arrived at *Astracan*, and we were thoroughly fatigued. For when we were in the Boat, whosoever's Turn it was to sleep, there was no Room to lye down, but he must sleep sitting, which is almost as bad as watching ; and when at Night we made fast to the Shore, the Danger of being surpriz'd by Villains gave us but painful Sleep. Going down the *Volga* from *Saratoff* is not in the least dangerous, provided

one has a good Boat and a well-arm'd Company : Then he has nothing to fear from *Calmucks* or *Russ* Pirates ; but we being in quite contrary Circumstances, made it very hazardous and fatiguing. On the 4th of *May* we arrived at *Astracan*, secured our Boat, and took a sound Sleep void of Fear for that part of the Night ; in the Morning we soon got us Quarters, and our Goods and Baggage on Shore. Here we found the Company of *Armenians* we so much wanted to join, who intended to load their Goods on board one of the *Czarina's* Vessels, which was to sail for *Reshd* in about three Weeks. We had all this Time to inform ourselves about the *Persian* Trade, and how it was carried on both by the *Russians* as well as the *Armenians* : We found the latter very shy in giving us Information, fearing we came to put in for a Share with them in their Profits ; therefore we could make no sure Dependence on what they inform'd us : Which was, that hitherto the Trade from *Astracan* to *Persia* had been free and open, and foreign Merchants importing Goods into *Persia* might carry them to what Market they liked best, and dispose of them to whom they pleased ; but this Year all Goods that arrived at *Reshd* were obliged to be sold there, and that the * *Shach* would not permit any one to buy them except his own Merchants ; for altho' they may keep the Goods by them if they do not like the Price the *Shach's* Merchants offer, yet they could not carry them to any other Market, or sell them to any other. Also that the *Shach* had engross'd all the Raw-Silk to himself, so that those who would buy Silk must buy it of his

Mer-

* *Shah*, as Mr. Fraser writes it.

Merchants, and not of the *Persian Boors* as formerly.

We were likewise assur'd, that the *English East-India-Company's* Servants had quitted *Ispahan*; and, as these * *Joulfa Armenians* gave out, were obliged to leave that City on the express Order of *Nadir Shach*, whose Displeasure they had some way incurr'd. These *Armenians* are the greatest Traders of all that Nation, and it is they who carry on so considerable a Trade thro' *Russia* to *Amsterdam*. Besides, they told us, that it was certain that the *Legistan* or Mountain *Tartars* of the Province of *Shervan*, had rebell'd against *Nadir Shach*; had cut off his Brother and many of his Troops who were sent to quell them; but that this Rebellion did not interrupt the Trade of the Province of *Gilan*.

All things being thus unhappily circumstanced made us determine to proceed directly from *Astracan* to *Chiva*, and thence to *Bokhara*, for which Place the Goods that we had with us were chiefly sort'd and designed; in order to which we view'd a Vessel belonging to a *Russ* Merchant, which was bound to a Landing-Place, where a Ferry-Boat brings Goods of all Sorts proper for that Country, on the East Side of the *Caspian*, from whence cross the *Step* (or Desert) in about ten Days we might arrive at *Chiva*, and so on to *Bokhara*, to which Place two *Russ* Factors were going in this Vessel, and also several *Chisinsky Tartars*, who came in this same Vessel from the Port or Landing-Place last Year. But on more mature Deliberation we were forced to lay aside this Design, tho' with
much

* *Joulfa Armenians* are such of them as are the Inhabitants of *Ispahan*, and are the richest of them.

much Regret, since our Curiosity made us eager to have seen *Bakhar*, and from thence to have return'd back thro' *Persia*: At the former we were sure to have sold our Goods for a considerable Profit, and at the same time have gain'd Knowledge of a Country so little known to *Europeans*, and on which we chiefly placed our Hopes. The chief Reasons that dissuaded us were, that the Vessel, on examining her, we found to be an old crazy flat-bottom Fishing Vessel, our Companions to be only two or three mean *Russians*, and in crossing the *Step* to *Chiva* from the Place we land, the great Risque we run of being plunder'd and sold for Slaves. For though it should be true that the *Khan*, or Governor, does on Notice of this Vessel's Arrival at the Landing-place, send a small Convoy to meet and protect the *Carravan* (so the Goods and Passengers this Vessel bring are call'd ;) yet this is but a slender Security, as he may at the same time send a much stronger Party to plunder them. All the *Tartars* are known to be most subtil and artful at Stratagems, therefore one must be always on one's Guard, and cautious in dealing with them, for they won't fail to deceive you if any way they possibly can. But what prevail'd with us most to desist from this Expedition, was the Certainty we had of the *Persians* having fallen into that Country; so that had we arrived safe at *Chiva* and *Bakbara*, there was little Hopes of our Return by the Way of *Persia*; and if so, then the principal End of our Journey would have been lost, and we should have gain'd no Information of the Silk Trade in the Province of *Gilan*; to which Place we were forced again to turn our Eye, tho' we had

but a sad and gloomy Prospect in that Quarter. What supported us was, that the *Armenians* shipped off Goods for *Reshd*, and so we now resolved to do, and to stand the same Chance they did.

Before we had seen *Astracan* we were very much prejudiced in its Favour, and concluded from its Situation (so commodiously as we imagined) it must be very beautiful, &c. but we did not find it so. It stands 100 * Versts from the Bar, at the principal Entrance of the *Volga*. This is very inconvenient, because those Ships or Vessels that are fit for the *Caspian*, are not adapted for mounting the Stream of the *Volga*, from the Road at the Entrance of the *Volga* to *Astracan*, and which they are frequently longer about than in making their Voyage or Passage cross the *Caspian*, besides the Delays they are subject to, both in going and coming, from the Guard-Ship at the Entrance of the *Volga*. Whereas had *Astracan* been actually a Sea-Port on the *Caspian*, all these and many more Inconveniences had been avoided. There does not appear to be above 20 or 25 Vessels which cross the *Caspian*, that belong to the *Russ* Merchants of *Astracan*; there are some of them a Sort of Fly-boats; the rest are *Smacks* or *Hoys*, the former are about 250 Tons burthen, the latter 100 to 150 Tons. Whilst the Crown of *Russia* kept the Province of *Gilan* in its Possession, the *Russians* of *Astracan* employed their Vessels themselves, chiefly in carrying Provisions of all Kinds to supply the *Russian* Army; but now their Vessels are mostly freight-

* 100 Versts is 75 Miles.

ed by the *Armenians*, for whom they carry Goods and Passengers to and from *Astracan* to *Derbent*, *Backu* and *Reshd* ; also in carrying * *Nephta* and Passengers from *Backu* to *Reshd*, for the *Persians* ; likewise Provisions for the *Russian* Garrison, and others at *Turky*. The *Russ* Merchants at *Astracan*, of whom there are many very rich, don't concern themselves much with foreign Trade, which is in a manner wholly in the Hands of the *Armenians* and *Indians*, but confine themselves to the Fisheries on the *Caspian* and *Volga*, in which they find great Profit. They send very large Vessels up the *Volga*, some of them 400 even to 500 Tons, loaded with Salt Fish, chiefly *Sturgeon*, *Belluga*, † *Sizan*, and ‡ *Sudack*. The *Sizan* are found in infinite Quantities both above and below *Astracan*. These great Vessels ascend the Stream of the *Volga* quite to the City of *Macao*, where they arrive at the Time of the Fair, and bring back from thence, and from the other Cities and Towns adjacent on the *Volga*, Provisions of all Sorts to supply the City of *Astracan*, near which, for many hundred Miles, little or no Corn grows.

The *Armenians* and *Indians* are the principal Shopkeepers in *Astracan* for foreign Commodities. The former have a Suburb to themselves ; those of them who reside constantly at *Astracan* have Houses for their Families ; but both *Indians* and *Armenians*, who only come and go to and from *Persia*, live in *Caravansera's*, or publick Inns.

* *Nephta*, an Oil used in Lamps, &c. which issues out of some Mountains near *Astracan* and *Backu*.

† *Sizan*, Carp of a prodigious Size.

‡ *Sudack*, like a Codling, but much better.

The *Russian* Fleet, which belongs to the Government, is chiefly laid up at *Astracan*, where there is an Admiralty, in which the commanding Officer, who is commonly a Lieutenant, resides; he has under his Command two Lieutenants, a Body of Soldiers, Carpenters, and others. But there is another Ship-yard (just within the Bar, at the Entrance into the *Volga* out of the *Caspian*, 90 Versts below *Astracan*) it is named *Ferkee*. Here are fitted out and laid up all the Vessels of the Crown that annually cross the *Caspian*, and it is a convenient Place to fit or careen at; the worst at this Place is, that when it blows hard at S. E. and E. S. E. the Island of *Ferkee* is liable to be laid wholly under Water, without the Bar. Thirty Versts below is a sandy Island, named *Cbeterybuger*; on this Island is a Light-house or Beacon; and off this Island lay the principal Guard-ship. This is a tolerable good Road, where Ships may ride in two and two Fathom and an half Water, within about a Mile or two from the Shoar, and in four Fathom Water about a League off the Shoar. Here it is that all Vessels coming from *Gilan*, *Backu* and *Derbent*, perform their *Quarentine*, but the Passengers commonly have Leave to perform theirs on Shoar on the Island. Thus far the Command of the *Astracan* Admiralty seems to extend (though the Sovereignty of all the *Caspian* was claimed by *Peter* the Great, when he was at *Astracan*, on his Expedition into *Persia*. The deepest Water that was then found on the Bar was not above six Feet, but now there is full nine Feet Water on the Bar. This was not occasioned by the shifting of the Sands, but by the encreasing or rising of the Water in the *Caspian*, which
they

they say is found to encrease for fifteen Years, and decrease for the same Time, on all the Shoars of the *Caspian* ; and hence it comes that the Island *Jerkee* is liable to be laid wholly under Water.

As to *Astracan*, though it stands on a low sandy Island, it is not subject to be overflowed, yet some part of its Suburbs are sometimes. This City is enclosed with a high brick Wall, on which are Battlements after the old manner, as is also the *Citadel*. It is very populous, and the *Caravanfera* and Market make a very noble Appearance ; but the Houses are chiefly built of Wood, which being scarce here, they are most of them built out of the Timber of Vessels, which bring Provisions from the upper part of the *Volga*, and are afterwards commonly sold for that Purpose ; and indeed as *Astracan* is wholly supply'd with Provisions by the *Volga*, it causes a great Confluence of Vessels thither.

On the 23d of *May*, being informed by the Lieutenant Commander of the Admiralty, that a Vessel belonging to the Empress would sail for *Reshd*, we immediately put our Goods and Baggage on board a Vessel to proceed down the *Volga*, and the next Day in the Afternoon arrived at *Jerkee* ; the Midshipman, that commands there, gave us the best Quarters he could procure us, which was a Sail-loft ; for the Houses there are but very mean ones, except the Admiralty-house, which consists of four Rooms, in which are quartered four Midshipmen. We arrived at *Jerkee* five Days before the *Armenians*, and were forced to tarry five Days longer before they had loaded their Goods, and the Vessel ready to sail.

June

June 3d. We left *Ferkee*, in fair Weather and a Calm, so we drove with the Stream over the Bar. The Circumstances of our Voyage we refer to the Log-Book, and only observe, that after a very Fair-weather Passage of about a Fort-night we arrived safe in *Zinzella Road*, and the next Day got into the Bar and enter'd the Haven. *Zinzella* is the Sea-port of the City of *Reshd*, the principal City of the Province of *Gilan*. There is about nine Foot Water on the Bar. On the following Day we sailed and warped cross *Zinzella Lake*, which is about five Leagues over, and came to a small Village on the south Bank of the Lake, named *Perre Buzzar*. Here the *Persian* Custom-house Officers have their Station, and all the Goods design'd for *Reshd* are landed ; there are some old Warehouses built by the *Russians*. The City of *Reshd* stands inland eight Miles from *Perre Buzzar*, and from whence Goods are carried to the City.

June 21st. We landed our Goods and Baggage, and after they had been visited by the Custom-house Officers, we proceeded directly with them to *Reshd*, where when we arrived they were lodged in the Custom-house ; but our Baggage after it had been inspected was immediately returned us. Our Goods remain'd about three Days in the Custom-house, in which time they were open'd, view'd and valued ; the Duty on their Valuation was *Five per Cent.* in the current Coin : They gave us them, and left it to us when to discharge the Duty. We were obliged to take up our Lodgings in a very indifferent *Carravansera*, no better Quarters being on a sudden to be had : The best of them here are but mean ones, the Rooms having no Light but
what

what comes in at the Door, and are rather a small sort of Cells than Rooms; that we, who had never been lodg'd so before, could not help thinking that we were in a *Fail*.

It was nine Days before we could get a House, which we hired for five Rubles a Month. In this House the *Russian* Consul formerly lived: It was a pleasant airy Place; it seem'd a Heaven to us, if compar'd to our *Carravansera*. On our Arrival here it was our greatest Concern in what Character to act, being such intire Strangers, and the first *Englishmen* that ever came hither on account of Trade. It suited our Inclinations best, as it was our Design, to have liv'd privately and unobserv'd, and so to have return'd; but this we found utterly impracticable, for the *Joulfa Armenians* at *Astracan*, as well as those who came over in the same Vessel with us, being much alarm'd at our coming, had inform'd every body of us, particularly the *Vizir* and *Mustapha*, the Commanders of the Province of *Gilan*, and whom, we were well assured, they endeavour'd to prejudice against us. Therefore had we pretended our Journey hither was only out of Curiosity, it might have proved fatal to us, by giving the *Armenians* an Opportunity to have insinuated that we were *Spies*, and were come here only on some mischievous Purpose. After some Consideration, and the best Information we could get of the Nature and Humour of the *Persians*, we determin'd to act in our own proper Character as Merchants, being the safest, and what we could abide by at all Events; and to prevent the *Vizir's* sending to enquire who we were, it would be better to wait on him ourselves, and to tell him our own Story: The *Vizir*
being

being out of Town, one of us waited on *Mustapha* (who is Commander of the City in his Absence) who was receiv'd very courteously ; his Behaviour was very much like a Gentleman. Excuse was made for the Absence of the other thro' an Indisposition : And he was inform'd that we were *Englishmen*, come with a small Cargo to try how our Cloths would sell in *Gilan*, and to buy up Silk ; that when we had made the Experiment, and should find it answer, we should then engage largely in the Trade, and probably some of us come and constantly reside here ; and that it was fit that one us, who was a Seaman as well as Merchant, should come to view the *Caspian* ; that we might the better know if it was safely navigable, and how far we might venture our Goods cross it ; also to see if the present Vessels that now cross the *Caspian* were to be trusted, or whether we should be obliged to have Vessels of our own.

To which *Mustapha* reply'd, That the *Shach* was a great Encourager of Trade, and would no doubt favour our Design ; and that we might depend on having all the Indulgence and Protection we could in reason desire ; that he would immediately make a Report of us to the *Vizir Mulin* (that was his Name.) A Reception so favourable made us very easy. However we thought it necessary to wait on the *Vizir* as soon as possible ; tho' the Journey to him would be a little expensive.

June 27th. Having provided ourselves with Horses, we set out for *Languaon*, a City about fifty Versets to the Eastward of *Reshd*, where the *Vizir* has a Country-Seat, and where the Heats are much more moderate than at *Reshd*. It was
late

late in the Evening when we arrived at *Languaon*, so our Guide and Linguist, who is a *Persian*, carried us directly to the *Calenter*'s, who not being at home, hiseldest Son receiv'd us very civilly. When he came in, he repeated the Compliments his Son had made us, and order'd Supper up: After we had eat we retired to our Room; the eldest Son came to us and brought two more *Persians* with him. We finding that they drank strong Liquors, and that the *Calenter* had excellent Lemon Juice, we treated them with Punch till midnight, at which time our Brandy was near at an end; we had not brought much with us, not expecting to find such merry Fellows among the *Persians*, *Nadir Shach* having on very severe Penalties forbid them the Use of spiritous Liquors, as well as the Juice of the Grape. One of the *Persians* sung us a great many Songs in his Language: He was reckon'd a great Proficient in Singing. He began so low one could scarce at first hear him, but as he proceeded he continu'd to raise his Voice, and before he had ended it might very well pass for Screaming, for we were almost deafened with the Noise: Yet our Linguist made an Excuse for him, and said, he never heard him perform so badly, for that when he was free from a Cold you might very well hear him at half a Mile Distance.

June 28th. About Sun-rise we waited on the *Vizir*, having sent our *Present* before us; for there is no appearing before a great Man in *Persia* for the first Time without a Present. He received us and our Present very kindly, bidding us welcome, and immediately Chairs were brought us to sit down. Our Linguist again inform'd him whom we were, and on what Account we came

into *Persia*, and begged the Favour of his Protection. He answer'd us, That as we were Strangers, so he reckon'd us his Guests; and therefore had we not come about Business, it was his Duty to do all in his Power to serve us: That as to our Design, he would talk with us about it when he came to *Reshd*, and then he would forthwith make a Report of us to the *Shach*, who, he was assur'd, would not fail to favour it. He excus'd himself that he could not ask us to dine with him that Day, because he was to go immediately to *Reshd*; but he desired that we would tarry and rest ourselves with the *Calenter*, who would be very glad of our Company. So after having been treated by the *Vizir* with Coffee, Tea, and Sweetmeats, we retir'd to the *Calenter*'s. The House of the *Vizir*, according to the *Persian* Taste, is no mean one: It stood at the west End of a large oblong Court, which was enclos'd with a Wall a Quarter of a Mile in circuit; the Ground was not pav'd with Stones, but cover'd with a Greensod. The east End of the House is one large Gallery, cover'd over head, in which is a Fountain that plays. We ascended to the Gallery by many Steps, so that it was rather in the middle Story above twenty Feet from the Ground; this gave it the Command of a vast extended Landskip: The Prospect all the Way to the Eastward and the adjacent Country being finely interspers'd with Mountains, Woods, and Vales, nothing could be more delightful. At the farther End of the Gallery sat the *Vizir*, and on each Side of him, close to the Walls, sat on Carpets, on the Floor, several *Persians* of Note, smoaking out of their *Caullyons*, with their Legs under them,

them, and not acroſs after the *Turkiſh* Manner, obſerving a profound Silence. The *Vizir* is about thirty five Years old, and has attain'd to the Command of 1000 Men, having a ſort of *Colonel's* Rank. In the Abſence of the Governor the *Vizir* has a Guard of an hundred Men : Theſe he had order'd to be drawn up on foot under the Gallery, in two ſingle Lines facing each other, the Space of twenty Foot being betwixt each Line : This, no doubt, he intended as a noble Piece of Grandeur ; but to us, who had ſeen *European* Guards, it appear'd a very mean Sight. We afterwards ſaw this Company frequently perform their Exerciſe by our Houſe at *Reſhd*. All their Diſciplining, as far as we could perceive, was galloping away two or three together, and diſcharging their Pieces in full Speed, exactly after the Manner of the *Ruſs* *Coffacks*. Their Arms were old and aukward, with Match-locks ; their Clothes, a white coarſe Woolen Cloth, little better than what the *Ruſſian* Boors make and wear.

We return'd to the *Calenter's*, with whom we now began to be acquainted, and having our Rooms to ourſelves we retir'd when we pleas'd. We occaſion'd him more Gueſts than uſual ; perceiving that their Coming was chiefly to ſee us, we ſate moſtly in the publick Room, which was very handſome, and in the middle a Fountain playing. Among ſeveral other People of Note came three *Aſtrologers*, and with them three of their *Disciples* ; the former were drefs'd in White, with remarkable large white *Turbants* on their Heads, but their *Disciples* were drefs'd in a common *Persian* Habit. The *Persians* are even to this Day great Lovers of *Aſtrology*, and pay a profound Re-

spect to the Professors of it, relying much on their Predictions. All this we were well inform'd of, and therefore took care to shew them a particular Respect; and the more, as we verily believ'd they were sent by the *Vizir* on purpose to give their Opinions of us: We hope they gave a favourable one, for our Linguist had unknown to us inform'd them that one of us was a Proficient in *Astronomy*, which was the Occasion of the principal *Astronomer* to send a Present of a *Persian Calendar*, very fairly written. The *Vizir* had order'd some of his People to go out and kill us a Deer, of which there are great Plenty in the neighbouring Mountains; at Noon they returned and brought a fine fat Buck. On this we supped, having din'd on the *Calenter's* Provisions. At Supper we were attended by Order of the *Vizir* with two *Persian* Musicians, who play'd on a sort of Bag-pipes, that were very untunable and shrill; and this wretched Noise we were forc'd to commend, and, what was much worse, endure it for some Hours.

Next Morning we took leave of the *Calenter*, and return'd to *Reshd*. But it being pretty late, we suffer'd much from the Heat, and were both of us something out of order, otherwise this would have been a very pleasant Journey; for on all Sides of us were Groves of most sort of Fruit-trees, and the Gardens abound with an infinite Number of *Water-Melons*, which were ripe at this Time. The vast Number of small Trenches which convey running Water to the *Rice* Fields, yielded us a very refreshing Sight in those extream Heats, as well as frequently allay'd our Thirst.

July 1st. This Afternoon we waited on the *Vizir*, and again related to him the End of our coming into *Persia* : He being alone, we had much Discourse with him ; the Result of which was, that as to the Goods we now brought with us, he said the *Sbach's* Merchant would buy them, and he could assure me, that he would give as much for them as any other ; that if we pleas'd we might go to the *Sbach* at *Mesched*, and negotiate our own Affairs ; but, as we had intimated, waiting on the *Sbach* ourselves, did not suit at present with the Disposition of our Affairs, he hinted, that if we would draw up a Petition, setting forth what Privileges we desir'd, he would directly forward it to the *Sbach*, who, he assur'd us, would grant a Decree in our Favour. It was not our Intentions to enter into any Negotiation this Year that might be the Occasion of a Decree ; but finding so fair an Opportunity offer itself, we thought it would be very imprudent to neglect it, tho' it should cost us a Sum of Money ; and without considerable Expences it could not be expected. We farther consider'd, if we refus'd to accept this Decree, or Grant, when it was so kindly offer'd to us, it would certainly render all that we had said of ourselves to be suspected, and would give the *Armenians* an excellent Handle against us, who, we knew, would embrace every Opportunity to injure and disappoint us : Besides, as we found the *Persian* Trade would very well answer, we concluded no Time ought to be lost, but that we ought to prepare the Way to enter upon it as soon as possible ; that our Friends would naturally expect this of us, who had favour'd our Journey hither,
and

and were determin'd to prosecute our Design and support us in it. In consequence of these Reflections we immediately embrac'd the *Vizir's* Offer, and return'd him our Thanks for the Honour he did us, in proposing to espouse our Interest ; that we would draw up a Petition as soon as possible, and lay it before him for his Approbation.

Having taken leave of the *Vizir*, we came to the *Shack's* Merchant, who retir'd into the back Apartment, where we convers'd a long Time together. He enquir'd particularly about the Nature of our Trade ; whether that Company of *English* Merchants which traded to *St. Peterburg* were the same that traded to *Isapban* by way of the *East Indies* : We answer'd all his Questions, as we imagin'd, much to his Satisfaction, and afterwards inform'd him of the Conversation we had had with the *Vizir* just before, and of our Intention to send a Petition to the *Shack* at *Mesched* to crave his Protection and free Trade to his Dominions. He reply'd, we could not do better : As our Petition related to Trade, it would be referr'd to the *Shack's* principal Merchant, who is his Treasurer and a Favourite. He said he would write particularly to his Master, the said principal Merchant, concerning us, and that he was ready to do us all the good Offices in his Power. We thank'd him ; and added, that it would be of singular Advantage to us to have our Business speedily dispatch'd ; if he would please to intimate the same to his Master he would do us a very great Favour, because our Stay would be but short, we intending to return by the next Vessel that sail'd for *Astracan*.

The

The next Day we drew up a Petition in *English*, which we got translated into the *Persian* Language, in the best Manner we could, which is as follows.

*The Humble PETITION of the BRITISH
Company of Merchants, trading to the Em-
pire of RUSSIA.*

I. **T**HAT the said Company may have Leave freely to navigate the *Caspian*, and may at all Times sail to and from any of the Great *Shack's* Ports on the *Caspian* with Merchandize without Restraint.

II. That the Company may at all Times import into any Part of the Great *Shack's* Dominions, situate either in *Persia*, *India* or *Bokhara*, such Commodities and Manufactures as are the Product of *Great Britain*, or of any other Kingdom or Empire that may be found vendible in *Persia*, *India* and *Bokhara*, paying such Duty only on Importation as the Subjects of *Persia* usually pay. That they may be suffer'd to invest the Produce of such Merchandize as they shall import in Raw-Silk, or any other Commodity, the Product of the Great *Shack's* Dominions, paying such Duty on Exportation only as the Subjects of *Persia* customarily pay.

III. That the Company may have Leave freely to hire or buy Houses or Ware-houses in any Part of the Great *Shack's* Dominions; there to dispose of their Goods to the best Advantage, without being liable to pay any other Duty than what was first paid on Importation.

IV. That the Company may have all imaginable Protection for their Persons and Effects whilst they

they shall continue in the Great *Shack's* Dominions, and Leave to depart thence freely at all Times, as their Occasions may require.

V. That the Company will be ready at all Times to contract with the Great *Shack's* Merchants for any Quantity of Cloth for the clothing the *Persian* Army, or any other Use, the *Shack's* Merchants delivering Proofs of such Cloth, the Price they will receive them at, and the Quantity they want: That when the said Cloths shall be imported according to Contract, if the *Shack's* Merchants find any of them that do not come up to the Proof (or Pattern) they may reject them; but for those they shall receive, to pay ready Money. That the Merchants may dispose of those Cloths that may be refus'd immediately, or when they think fit, in any Part of the Great *Shack's* Dominions on the same Terms. The Company will be at all Times ready to contract with the *Shack's* Merchants for any Quantity of any other Sort of Commodity. The Company hope no manner of Delay will be made on the Part of the *Shack's* Merchants, in receiving Goods contracted for; and for all such Goods as shall be accepted, they expect the Money to be paid them immediately on the Delivery of the Goods, otherwise the Company will be great Sufferers, as they can't else make Returns for such Goods the same Year.

VI. That if the Company shall contract with private *Persian* Merchants for any certain Quantity of Goods, and any Dispute shall arise about the Delivery or Payment of the same, the Governor for the same Province to decide the Difference; but if the Company shall not choose to abide

abide by the Decision of the *Governor*, that then they may have Leave to appeal directly to the *Great Schah* himself.

VII. That the Company pay Duty on Goods, imported or exported, in the current Coin of *Persia* : But if any of their Ships shall arrive at any other of the *Great Schah's* Ports than *Reshd*, and shall not be furnish'd with *Persian* Money enough to discharge the Duty of such Goods as they import, then the Receiver of the Customs of such Port shall take a Bill of Exchange on the Company's House at *Reshd* for the Amount of such Duty.

VIII. That when the Company shall have paid Duty on Goods imported in such Port as they shall be imported into, the said Goods to be liable to no farther Duty on any Pretence whatsoever, altho' such Goods are carried from thence into any other Part of the *Great Schah's* Dominions.

IX. That Goods imported by the Company not for the *Schah's* Use, but design'd to be sold in the Inland Parts of his Dominions, may not be liable to be wholly unpack'd, but when visited by the Custom-house Officers only so far open'd as may satisfy them there is no Fraud design'd, but that the Contents of the Bales are such as they were reported to be.

X. That the Company may have a Person appointed to attend them, that on Occasion may be a Witness betwixt them and any Person they may contract with for, or sell Goods to, or for any other such Use.

We humbly crave Leave, that this our Business may be speedily dispatch'd that we may the sooner return with our Report ; and that if,
E through

through the small Time allotted us to draw up this Petition, we may have forgot any material Articles, we humbly hope that we may obtain them the next Year.

Signed { J. E.
and {
Sealed { M. G.

When this Petition was translated we laid it before the *Vizir*, for his and the Court Merchants Approbation. They were pleas'd to find no Fault with it. At the same Time we inform'd them, we had nothing to accompany our Petition worth tendering the *Schah*, unless a Gold Repeating-Watch (which was a very curious one) might be thought so. They both view'd the Watch, and approv'd the sending it; for delivering a Petition in *Persia* without its being attended with a Present is impracticable, and indeed it is an Affront to attempt it. Having got our Petition fairly copy'd in the *Persian* and in the *English* Languages, we deliver'd both Copies and Repeating-Watch to the * *Kupecheen*; likewise we sent a plain Gold Watch to the *Schah's* Favourite and Treasurer. These were forwarded the 4th of *July*, by the *Kupecheen's* own Servant to *Mesbed*, where the young *Schah*, eldest Son of *Nadir Schah*, resides and govern'd *Persia* in his Father's Absence in *India*.

On our Arrival at *Reshd*, we found the Accounts that we had given us of the Affairs of *Persia* whilst we were at *Astracan* to be but too true, that the *Schah* by his *Kupecheens* (for he

* *Kupecheen*, or *Coopcheen*, a Court Merchant.

hath one or more in every City in *Persia*) was become, in a manner, the sole Merchant or Trader in all *Persia*, as none but the *Schah's Kupecheens* could buy any Goods imported: And as to Raw-Silk, not only the Product of the Province of *Gilan*, but of all the other Provinces that produce Silk, was wholly engross'd by the *Schah*. Hence we, amongst the rest, were oblig'd to tender our Goods to the *Schah's Kupecheen*. Soon after that we had offer'd our Goods to him, he sent several trading People of the City of *Reshd* to view them, and enquire the Price, and in a few Days to give him an Account, or make their Report to him : The *Kupecheen* declares thereon the Price he will give for them ; at the same time he let us know, that if we liked not the Price he offer'd for our Goods, we were free to carry them to any other Market in *Persia* ; that he wanted them not at an Under-Price, for at what the other Merchants valued them at, he was ready to give ; more he could not answer. We have before observ'd, that our Goods were chiefly sort'd for *Mesched* and the Frontiers of *Bokhara*, and there we would fain have carried them ; but then we should not have been able to have come back from *Persia* this Year ; because before we could have return'd from *Mesched* to *Reshd* all the Vessels design'd for *Astracan* would have been failed.

As the *Kupecheen* had offer'd us the Choice of all the Markets in *Persia* to sell our Goods at, and as this was a Favour he granted to none but ourselves, we thought we ought not to despise it, but try if any other Merchant would give us

a better Price than he offer'd us ; therefore, after a Fortnight and more beating the Market, and finding no one would give us so much for the greatest Part of our Goods as the *Kupecheen* had bid us, we were forc'd to close with him as the best Customer ; during which Time we had several *Persian* and *Armenian* Merchants came to view our Goods, with a Design to buy them, who were no ways influenced or awed by the *Kupecheen*. We met with one *Armenian* who was going to *Mesched*, and he bought Part of our Goods, and gave us considerably more than the *Kupecheen* had offer'd us ; and on our sending to him he immediately gave us a Pass for those Goods.

The Province of *Gilan*, of which *Reshd* is the principal City, is well known to produce the best and greatest Quantity of Silk of any Province of *Persia* ; but it is uncertain at present what Quantity it produces. The Silk-Works suffer'd much when *Peter* the Great took Possession of *Gilan*, as it occasion'd many of the *Persian* Boors to forsake their Habitations and neglect their Silk-Worms : This Injury *Gilan* has not yet recover'd. It is said, that the annual Duty paid on Silk in *Gilan*, for some Years last past, hath been only 5000 *Pood* *. Whereas it is evident, this Province must have produced a much greater Quantity every Year : This, they say, came to the *Schah*'s Knowledge, and occasion'd him to engross the Silk to himself this Year, more immediately with a View to know certainly what Quantity of Silk the Province did actually produce, than out of a Design to monopolize that Commodity and enhance its Price ;

* *Pood*, or 35 *English* Pounds.

Price ; for, according to the above Account, the Province of *Gilan* does not pay Duty on half the Silk it produces ; and if the other Provinces act in the same Manner, then the *Schah* is deprived of more than half his Duty on Silk, and no Commodity pays so high a Duty as Silk, or brings so much Money into the *Schah's* Treasury.

On the best and closest Enquiry we could make (for from what we have mention'd there can be no Reliance on the Custom-house Books) *Gilan* now produces not above 12000 *Pood* per Annum. About one half of this is consumed in *Persia*, and the rest is carried to the *European* Markets, thro' *Turkey* and *Russia*. Others say, that *Gilan* yields upwards of 15000 *Pood* of Silk ; but we choose to believe the more moderate Report : Though it is certain the Silk-Works continue greatly to improve.

Since we have so often mention'd the Prohibitions in Trade, we shall briefly relate how they came to take place, as we were inform'd. As soon as *Nadir Schah* had declared his Son sole *Regent*, or reigning *Schah* of *Persia*, he chose for his Favourite a Merchant of *Ispahan*, and made him his Treasurer : This was a cunning enterprizing Man in the Vigour of his Age. It was natural for a Man of such a Cast of Mind to neglect no Occasion to enrich himself ; and as one Means to do so, he fell upon this Project of engrossing to himself all the *European* Imports ; of all which he, by his Agents, proposed to be the sole Buyer and Seller. To enable him to carry on this pernicious Project, he proposed to the young *Schah* to advance him a Million of * *Robles*,
and

* A *Roble* is 4 s. 8 d. Sterling.

and to allow him this Privilege he was to pay Interest for this Sum at the Rate of 30 *per Cent. per Ann.* and to pay off the Principal in a certain Term of Years. Also at the same time he proposed the Monopoly of all the Raw-Silk in *Persia*, under Pretence of preventing all Frauds in the Duty of that Commodity. The young *Schah* granted the Favourite his Requests, extravagant as they were, and immediately thereupon his Servants were placed in all the great Cities of Trade, under the Name of the *Schah's Kupecheens* : These Gentlemen enter'd on their Office about the Beginning of this Year 1739, and have in a manner put a Stop to all the Trade of *Persia* ; particularly to that of the Province of *Gilan*, to which so many *Persian* and Foreign Merchants resort with Goods, and to buy up Raw-Silk.

This animated the People of *Reshd* to apply directly to the young *Schah* himself, and by their * *Calenter* boldly accuse his Favourite the Treasurer. They inform'd the *Schah*, That they were at any Time ready to part with their Lives and Fortunes to serve himself or Father ; but as no Emergency of State laid them under such Hardships, they had nothing to complain of but the insatiable Avarice of the Treasurer in the new Regulations of Trade, so they humbly hoped they might find Redress and Relief from such an unreasonable Burthen. At this the *Schah* was mov'd, and ask'd the Treasurer how he dare venture to deceive him in an Affair of such Consequence, and project such destructive Schemes only to enrich himself ? The Treasurer deny'd that it was to serve his own private Ends he enter'd

* *Calenter*, or Town-Clerk.

enter'd upon these Measures, but that he design'd the Profits of them for his Majesty's Use; and that his Projects did not lay the Province of *Gilan* under such Hardships as the *Calenter* represented; and that what he had advanced was a mere specious Pretence, he only taking this Opportunity of disobeying the *Schab's* Orders; and that these were only Beginnings: Should the * *Chan* of *Gilan* and the *Calenter* be suffer'd thus to proceed with Impunity, his Majesty would soon find they would object against all the Orders he should send them; and that it was of his Authority, as *Schab*, they really complain'd, tho' they were loath to acknowledge it, and not of any Grievance his Projects had laid them under.

These Arguments so prevail'd on the *Schab*, (who, as young as he was, could not bear to hear of his Authority being despised) that he instantly order'd the *Chan* to be degraded, and the poor *Calenter* to be strangled. So the same Prohibitions on Trade are still continued, only with this Difference, that the *Vizir* now sees the Price set on those Goods the Merchants buy, and they pay for them, which has not in the least mended the Matter.

Hence it appears, that the *Schab's* becoming the sole Buyer of all Goods was set on foot, and the Project of the Treasurer's, with no other View than to serve his own private Ends, and therefore it is to be hoped it won't last long; for it is of so monstrous a Kind, and such an intolerable Burthen and Perplexity on Trade, that its own Weight must soon destroy it. For supposing (what can never be expected) that the *Schab's*
Mer-

* Governor;

Merchants should continue to give the same Price for all Goods imported as the *Persian* private Merchants formerly gave, and should sell Silk at the same Price it was sold to Foreigners formerly at, and continue to pay the *Boors* their usual Price for it; yet would this Project thus cautiously managed be of pernicious Consequence to *Persia*, considering how many thousand petty Traders and Shop-Keepers would thereby be totally undone and set a-starving, all whose Profits must now center in the *Schab*. These heretofore got a comfortable Subsistence by buying some of them a Bale of Cloth or two, and other Goods, which they retail'd out; which sort of Employment much suits the *Persians*: But now the *Schab* himself, by his Agents, sells by the Measure or Ell; and as the other Retailers must first buy out of the *Schab*'s Ware-houses, so it can't be suppos'd they can any way find their Account in retailing at such a Disadvantage, and consequently must shut up their Shops.

It is certain, the *Schab* must know better than to continue Prohibitions, which, tho' never so prudently managed, must yet prove fatal to so vast a Number of his trading Subjects, and in the End destroy all the Trade of *Persia*. The Difficulty is, the Danger that attends the setting the *Schab* right in this Matter, as appears from the Disgrace of the *Governor* and the Fate of the poor *Calenter* of *Reshd* so lately. This Scheme seems calculated to impoverish the *Persian* Merchants; for it is the same thing to a Foreigner to sell his Goods, and to buy *Persian* Goods of the *Schab*'s Merchants as the *Persian* private Merchants, provided he can do it on the same Terms the *Schab*'s Merchants, and must deal

deal nearly on the same, or they will soon cease to trade with them. If they attempt to beat down the Price of foreign Commodities, and raise the Price of Silk, it can only serve their Turn but once, and another Year no Foreigners will send them any Goods, or come to buy any; and the Consequence will be, the *Kupecheens* will have little to do. It is generally believed the young *Schab* will be better informed, there being those about him, that at a proper Time will venture to set him right about this Affair. That he is ready to redress Grievances, and encourage Trade, we could produce several Instances; witness the Decree or Order he so readily granted us, and that, it is said, he lately granted to the *Armenians*, which impowers them to carry their Goods to any Market in *Persia*, without regard to the *Schab's Kupecheens*, that it is to be hoped the Treasurer's Projects are near at an end.

Indeed as to the Quantity of Silk the Province produces, there's the highest Reason the *Schab* should be satisfied therein. Now this could not be done so easily as by engrossing all the Silk for a Year or two; and it is no new Thing, and has been done before more than once.

In order to the better understanding the Affairs of *Persia* with regard to Trade, 'tis necessary we should briefly relate what is here told us of *Nadir Schab*, who is the famous *Kouli Kan*; who when he deposed the late *Schab*, (of the ancient *Schabs* of *Persia*) and ascended the Throne about four Years since, took on himself the Title of *Schab*, and Name of *Nadir*, which signifies *Wonderful*. As soon as he had seated him-

self firmly on the *Persian* Throne, and made Peace with the *Turks*, he proceeded on the *India* Expedition. At the same he established his eldest Son, *Risa Kuli Mirza*, sole Regent of the *Persian* Empire, commanding all the *Khans*, or Governors of Provinces, to regard his Son, and not himself, as reigning *Schah* of *Persia*; accordingly he has ever since governed *Persia*, and continued so to the Time his Father returned from *India*. It is about 18 Months since *Nadir Schah* took *Candahar*, which is esteemed the Key of the *Indies* on the North, and as such had been strongly fortify'd and garrison'd by the *Mogul*. It was likewise as well defended, for it cost *Nadir Schah* a Siege of eight Months to reduce it; which having done, and settled his Affairs on that Side, he marched directly forward into *India*, took *Labor*, and several other Cities, before the Great *Mogul* came in Person to oppose him, and put a Stop to his Victories. Not far from the City of *Dalhi*, the two royal Armies met, and here a very lucky Accident fell out which favoured *Nadir Schah*: the greatest Part of the *Mogul's* Army was under the Influence of a certain *Raja*, who commanded as Field-Marshal under the Great *Mogul*. The *Raja* being not on good Terms with the Great *Mogul*, on a sudden deserts him, and drew off those Troops that adhered to him, leaving his Prince with much the smaller Part of the Army, which yet much out-numbered the Enemy. The *Persian Nadir* apprized of this lucky Accident, did not fail to make the best use of it; and therefore instantly obliged the *Mogul* to give him Battle. In the Fight, the *Persians* put the *Mogul's* Army wholly to the Rout. The Great *Mogul* fled, and unhappily

happily shut himself up in *Dalhi*, or *Jonabat*, as it is called, which the *Nadir* presently invested, and soon carried it by Storm. Here again the *Mogul* fled, but in vain ; for being closely pursued he fell into the Hands of the *Persians*, and was made Prisoner.

It is generally reported, that as soon as *Nadir Schah* heard of the Great *Mogul's* being in his Possession, he sent his youngest Son in great Pomp to meet him, and conduct him to the Camp ; where when he arrived, the *Schah* treated him with all the Respect due to a Royal Prisoner, and seated the *Mogul* close by himself, and obliged him to dispatch all the Affairs of *India* as if he had been still a free Prince reigning as before, without any Controul. That after having agreed on certain Terms with the Great *Mogul*, and settled the Boundaries of each Empire, he re-instated him in the Possession of the *Indies*, and began his March back for *Candahar* and the *Bokhara's*. The *Nadir* immediately had this Battle and Victory proclaimed over all the Empire of *Persia*, with the Account of the *Mogul* being his Prisoner. Although it is difficult to come at the Truth of State Affairs in these arbitrary Countries, yet they do venture to say, that the young *Schah* had cut off the whole Race of the ancient *Schahs* of *Persia* ; for *Nadir Schah* left the deposed *Schah* alive, and all his Family, in his Son's Possession, when he left *Persia* and marched to *India* ; and this, some think, was the first Step the young *Schah* took to secure to himself the Crown of *Persia*.

There was a Decree publish'd in *Nadir Schah's* Name, dated immediately after his Successes in *India*, by which he exempts all his *Persian* Sub-

jects from Taxes for the ensuing three Years. The young *Schah*, during the Absence of his Father, took the City of *Baulk*, and secured the Frontiers of *Bokhara*, clearing them from the *Usbeck's* and *Turcoman Tartars*, who used so much to infest the Frontiers of *Khorasan*, the Province in which the City of *Mesched* is situated. There's a Report, that when *Nadir Schah* was at *Ispahan*, about five Years since, (which the *Joulfa Armenians* assure us was the Occasion of their being obliged to leave that Place) he sent for the *English* Agent, and enquired of him the Nature, &c. of the *English* Trade, to all which the Agent gave satisfactory Answers. But these *Joulfa's* having afterwards insinuated to the *Schah*, that the Subjects of *Persia* were denied free Trade to *England*, which yet the *British* Subjects enjoyed in *Persia*, he again sent for the *English* Agent, who when he came was not able to clear up this Point, why *Persian* Subjects were denied Trade in *England*, to the *Schah's* Satisfaction, and therefore was ordered to leave *Ispahan*. But a *French* Missionary, who was then at *Reshd*, allows the former Part of this Story, but denies the *English* were forced to leave *Ispahan*. He says, the Agent told the *Schah*, that if he would not be pleased to allow the Arrears due to the *English* Company on account of the Duties of *Ormuz*, half of which had been allotted them (for Money due to them out of the *Schah's* Treasury) that he should be obliged to retire out of his Dominions, and carry the Company's Goods to other Markets; that the *Schah* giving this Agent no Redress in this Affair, the Agent of his own Accord retired from *Ispahan*; but that they may return when they please, and that

that they now keep up their House there, where their Broker and Interpreter now lives. He added the following unlucky Circumstances : An *English East-Indiaman* riding at *Bender Abasse*, in the *Persian Gulph*, a *Persian General* seeing the Ship ride there, and being informed she had Money on board, sent and demanded a round Sum ; but the Commander of her let the *Khan* know he would part with no Money on any account ; on this the General ordered his Boats to board the Ship, and take it by Force, which they endeavoured to do ; but not being acquainted with this sort of Work, the Fire from the Ship presently sunk several of their Boats, and drowned many of the People. This made them soon desist, and the *Khan* was forced to continue his March without the Money. About the same Time there were two *English Vessels* riding at *Bussora*, which City is in the Possession of the *Turks*, but was closely besieged by the *Persians*. The *Turks* some-how surpris'd and got Possession of these two Vessels, and having mann'd them with *Turks*, made use of them very successfully against the *Persians* ; after which they returned them to the *English*. In this Action the *Persian General* happened to be killed by the Fire from the *English Vessels*. The succeeding Commander sent Advice of this to the *Schah*, alledging, this Misfortune was wholly owing to the Assistance the *English* had given the *Turks*, informing also of the Affair at *Bender Abasse*. At this News the *Schah* was exceeding angry ; for the General that was killed was a brave Man, and one of the *Nadir's* principal Favourites. The *Schah* sent immediately to the *English Agent*, then at *Bender Abasse*, to demand the Reasons
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for these extravagant Proceedings; to all which the Agent gave reasonable Excuses. The Affair was passed over soon after *Nadir Schah* made Peace with the *Turks*, and began his March to *India*. Notwithstanding these Circumstances, it is our Opinion, that neither of them were the Occasion of the *English* Agent's retiring from *Ispahan*; but that it is more likely the civil Broils then subsisting, and the unsettled State of *Persia*, made them in Prudence to withdraw themselves and their Effects from thence. Besides, the *Schah* had in a manner deserted *Ispahan*, his Son having established his Residence at *Mesched*, or *Mushad*. Although the *English* might now safely reside at *Ispahan*, the Storm that they dreaded being now blown over; yet, as they can't but know that the Trade from thence is now wholly transferr'd to *Mesched*, it would not be worth their while to return there again, or send any more Goods. This is confirmed by all People indifferently, who have lately come from *Ispahan*, who tell us, that it is almost drain'd of Inhabitants. Although the *Hollanders* have still their Agent and House there, yet the Goods they sell are so inconsiderable, that it is thought they'll soon leave that City.

The *Ispahan* Trade ought greatly to have answer'd formerly; the Expences of the *English* Agent being so very great, he living with the Grandeur of a little Prince. We were told by one who had the Charge of the Stables of one of these Agents, that he had commonly three Hundred Horses, Mules, and Camels in his Stables, not one third of which were used to bring or carry Goods; but they were chiefly kept for the use of the Agent's Family. The
same

same Person related, that about 30 Years since, the then reigning *Schah* of *Persia* did the *English* Agent the Honour of a Visit, who, to shew the *Schah* a singular Instance of Respect, cover'd the Road from the Court to the *English* House, near a Mile in Length, with Scarlet Cloth ; which after the *Schah's* Return, was left for the Populace. *Olearius* tells us, that the *English* Agent then in *Ispahan*, treated the *Holstein* Ambassador with a Magnificence which was equalled by no one, save the *Schah* himself. A long Time afterwards the *English* had great Interest at the Court of *Persia* ; and if they han't continued to have the same, it must be intirely owing to the Neglect or Mismanagement of the Servants of the *East-India* Company. But these grand Proceedings redounded more to the Honour of the Nation, than to the Profit of the Company ; since the *Hollanders* at the same time enjoy'd the same Privileges, and maintained themselves in them at so much less Expence. Whilst we have been here at *Reshd* we have taken all imaginable Pains to inform ourselves of the Trade of these Parts of *Persia*, but we find it very difficult to get a right Information. The *Persian* Merchants are shy and reserved, and will not enter presently into an Acquaintance. As for the *Armenians*, we durst not depend too far on their Intelligence, except two or three, of whose Veracity we have had sufficient Proofs. The Trade at *Ispahan* is now at its lowest ebb, and as the *English* have already done, so must all the rest of the foreign Merchants shortly abandon it ; yet this Trade is not lost, only transplanted to the City of *Mesched*. The *Persians* are still in the same want of the foreign Commodities as formerly,

ly, and still under the same Necessity of selling, or bartering away the Surplus of their own.

Ispahan owed its Wealth and Grandeur wholly to the Residence of the *Persian* Court there, and its Decline must necessarily follow on the *Schah's* withdrawing himself and Court, and giving the Preference to another City; so that *Mesched* is now become what *Ispahan* was, the Metropolis of the *Persian* Empire, and there the Trade of *Persia* must now center. But even without such a powerful Addition, as the *Schah's* Residence there must give to the Trade of *Mesched*, it was before a City of as large Extent, and Number of Inhabitants, as any one in *Persia*, except *Ispahan* itself, and this chiefly from its happy Situation in the Neighbourhood of the *Bokhara's*.

Musbad is very famous in the most ancient Histories of these Parts, having more than once, when she enjoyed a *Khan*, or sovereign Prince of her own, been Mistress of a great Part of *Persia*, as well as both the *Bokhara's*. She is now restored to her former Dignity, if she has not exceeded it. *Riza Kuli Mirza*, as well as *Nadir Schah*, do all they can to aggrandize it; they have endowed it with Privileges greater than *Ispahan* ever enjoyed, and use all possible Means to encourage and invite Foreigners and trading People to come and reside there. *Nadir Schah* thus favours *Musbad*, as it is the principal City of the Province of *Khorasan*, in which he was born, or in *Calot*, which is in the Neighbourhood.

The Seat of Trade in the *Persian* Empire being thus far removed, the Market can't be now commodiously, if at all, supplied with foreign Commodities by the same *Canal*, which furnished
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it ; this gives a favourable Opportunity to those who are inclin'd to supply it by a better. *Mesched* is but eight or nine Days Journey, by Post, from *Reshd*, and not a Month for a Caravan ; and from the Port of *Astrabat* not half so long : so that the *British* Merchants can't desire a more inviting Occasion than the present Juncture, to enter into the *Persian* Trade, whilst *Mesched*, its Seat, is near the *Caspian*, and adjacent to the Province of *Gilan*, in the Product of which their Return must be made. But should Fortune again abandon *Mesched*, and the *Persian* Monarch desert her, yet it will never be the Interest of the *British* Merchants so to do, as they will always find their Account to establish their principal Mart at *Mesched* ; here they'll be always at hand to supply the Demand of the *Bokhara's*, which can be no otherwise supply'd than by the way of *Persia*. From *Siberia* the *Russians* can't cross the Desert, or *Step*, to *Bokhara*, on account of the *Calmucks*, and as it would be so tedious, and almost an impracticable Journey ; nor have they ever attempted, or can they at present from * *Oranberg*, or any other City, or Settlement on the River *Voick*, cross the *Step* to *Bokhara*, without infinite Hazard : Neither can the *Bokhara's* be supply'd by the way of the *East-Indies*, as they lie so far inland ; therefore the *Bokharans* can be supply'd with *European* Commodities no other way than by *Mesched* only. Could the *British* Merchants once well establish themselves in the

* A new *Russian* Fortrefs on the Frontiers towards *Bokhara*.

Trade of the *Bokhara's*, for which the Northern Provinces of *Persia* would yield proper Returns, they might rest contented, and let who will supply the Southern Provinces of *Persia*. For who consider the vast Extent of both the *Bokhara's*, the Kingdom of *Tibet*, and *Tangut*, and the great Tract of Land which lies to the South-East of them, and at the same time know that they contain so many great and populous Cities, in which *European* Commodities are in the highest Demand, must conclude a very advantageous Trade might be settled on that Side, and might be almost infinitely extended. Nor is it in the least to be doubted, that were such a Trade once established, there would be found in those Parts other Commodities than Gold and coloured * Stones, to invest our Returns in for *Europe*, should those and the Product of *Gilan* be not thought sufficient. That the *English* may possess themselves of this Trade, with a certain View of considerable Profit, whensoever they please, is so evident, that it would be ridiculous to go about to prove it, because they can have no Rivals in it; they have nothing to do but to send their Goods to *Petersburg*, and from thence to be forwarded to *Astracan*, from thence cross the *Caspian* to *Astrabat*, from thence to *Mesched*, from which City all the *Persian* and *Bokharan* Demands would be supply'd; and this would be equally as easy and safe, as sending Goods from *London* to *Petersburg*, and we esteem more so, as we think from Experience that the Navigation of the *Caspian* is less subject to Danger than that of the *Baltick*, if

* Rubies, Sapphires, &c.

navigated with fit and proper Vessels; for even now, with the indifferent Vessels of the *Russians*, and more indifferent Seamen, very few ill Accidents attend them, except a Vessel belonging to a *Russ* Merchant, which winter'd at *Reshd*, and sail'd from thence in *May*, with some Goods to *Baku* and *Derbent*; she was the rest of the Summer in finding her way to the Entrance of the *Volga*. Hence appears the Necessity of the *British* Merchants having their own Vessels, and the greatest Part *British* Seamen, that they may be able to command their own Time and Ports.

Gilan Silk, for this two or three Years past, has been much dearer than heretofore, occasioned from the Silk of the City *Ganges* and *Shamaky* having failed, the former having been slightly visited with the Plague, and the other with the *Lefginsky Tartars*, and *Nadir Schah*; the *Tartars* first plundered and destroyed the Country, and the *Schah* having demolished old *Shamaky*, obliged the Inhabitants to build them a new City, some few Versts from the Ruins of the old. But as the *Persian Boors* of the northern Provinces find great Profit in raising Silk-Worms, and make it their principal Care, so it's not to be doubted but those Countries will soon overcome these Injuries, as the *Ganges* has already, there being Silk in great Plenty at a reasonable Price. That City hath now for above this two Years been free from the Plague. As for the Security the Merchants have for their Persons and Effects, they are ever liable to the Restraints of Princes, but not more here than in any Part of *Europe*, as appears by the *East-India* Company retiring with their Goods from *Isfahan* unmolested, even in the worst of Times,

when there was a Revolution, and they were under the Displeasure of *Nadir Schah*, the Necessity of whose Affairs at that Juncture might have tempted him to have sequestered their Money and Effects. The *Indians* also who reside in *Persia* (of which there are great Numbers) are exempt from all Plundering or Imposition whatsoever, altho' it's now not above three Years since the *Schah* has been engaged in a War with the Great *Mogul*, their Sovereign. The *Armenians* indeed the *Schah* has now and then made free with, raising considerable Sums of Money on them; but these are Subjects of *Persia*, who, according to the Custom of all arbitrary Governments, are treated at the Will and Pleasure of their Prince, yet at the same time he never laid a Restraint on their Effects in Trade. And although the *Schah's* Merchant was this Year the only Buyer in all *Gilan*, and bought the whole Quantity of Goods they had, yet he did not abate them three *per Cent.* on their Cloth less than what they had sold it for to the *Persian* private Merchants the last Year; and for their other Goods he gave them reasonable Prices; which shews the *Schah* is cautious of distressing even the * *Armenians*, in the way of Trade, which makes his *Coopcheen* very careful in avoiding giving them just Cause of Complaint against him. Not long since *Nadir Schah's* own Brother attempted to oppress the trading People in order to raise a Contribution to himself, which coming to the *Schah's* Ears, he was so exceeding angry at it, it had near cost him his Head.

* The *Armenians* are looked on here as *Jewish* Subjects are in some *Christian* Countries.

We could give many more Instances of his Favour to his trading Subjects, but to prevent being tedious we avoid it. That the *British* Merchants may be assured of the same Indulgence as other foreign Merchants in *Persia*, or to be preferr'd before them, there's all the Reason to expect, because no other Merchants can supply the N.E. part of *Persia*, with those Commodities most in Demand, at so easy a Price, or can afford to give so much for their Silks. This all the *Armenians* and *Persians* are well acquainted with, which alarms the former, and makes the latter our Friends. Of this we shall give this particular Instance. As soon as we had informed the *Schah's* principal Merchant of our Design to petition his Majesty, he called together all the chief of the Merchants in *Reshd* to hold a Conference with them : the Question he propos'd was, Which deserved the greatest Encouragement, the *English* or the *Armenian* Merchants ? When it was unanimously determined in our Favour. This we were informed of both from the *Persians* and *Armenians* who were at the Debate.

Since the *Schah's* Court has been removed from *Ispahan* to *Mesched*, the Market of the latter has been but scantily supply'd with *European* Commodities, therefore they are desirous to give us the greatest Encouragement to come to *Mesched*, well knowing this Market can be no otherways well furnish'd than by the *English* Merchants through the Empire of *Russia*, the Empress of which hath a Consul and a Minister at *Ispahan*. Hence it comes that there are going and returning all the Summer *Russ* Vessels, which carry Dispatches to and from *Astracan* to *Reshd*, which

which Vessels or * Packet-boats, belong to her *Czarian* Majesty, in one of which we came over, and the same way intend to return, we having a very intimate Correspondence and Friendship with the Consul.

August 11. We had intended to have left *Reshd* this Week, and a *Dutch* Servant, with about 1000 Rubles worth of Effects, to be invested in Silk, and to have follow'd us the first Opportunity; but the *Coopcheen* told us, the Money was ready for our Effects when we pleas'd to take it, but that he was much surpris'd to hear we intended to leave *Persia* before the Decree we petition'd for was granted us, which he was certain would not be long before it arriv'd; that he apprehended that the *Vizir* could not answer to let us return before the Decree should arrive, or until he should receive particular Instructions how to act concerning us. This new and surprizing Discourse alarm'd us, that we resolv'd to go directly to the *Vizir*, with whom we remonstrated, that our Intentions were to return in her *Czarian* Majesty's Packet, that would sail in about a Week. After some Consideration he made Answer, that it seem'd strange to him, that we should propose to leave *Persia* without an Answer to our Petition, when he had assur'd us, that we might expect a Decree in our Favour, and that we should return and leave undone the principal Thing for which we said we came here, when we might so easily obtain it. He confess'd he was at a Loss to reconcile this with the rest of

* The last Packet-boat sails for *Astracan* about the latter end of *August*, and none after till the next Spring.

our Behaviour, which hitherto had given intire Satisfaction. He feared that we must lately have taken some Disgust at the Country, which made us thus suddenly resolve to return and leave our Affairs unfinished. This might proceed from some Insinuation of the *Armenians*, whom he wish'd we would not give too much Credit to ; or if we had not met the Honours we expected, he was very sorry for it. He added, he should have been to have waited on us himself, and invited us to have been his Guests, but that he had scarce Time to dispatch the *Schah's* Business, which had prevented him in both. To this we replied, that we returned him Thanks for the many Favours that we had received from him, which were more than we could have expected, and as many as we could desire ; that as to the *Armenians* we conversed but very little with them, and that they had no Influence on us so as to forward or retard our Return ; that could we have had the Honour to have carried back with us the *Schah's* Decree, it would have been a singular Happiness ; that we had now tarried twice the Time he was pleased to intimate the Decree would arrive in ; and that as so great a Monarch as the *Schah* could not but have infinite Business of more moment, we fear'd our Petition might be esteemed a Matter of private Concern ; it might be a long Time before it came to be read or consider'd, at least so as to obtain an Answer ; and the more Cause we had to fear it, was, as we had no Friend at Court to solicit for us ; and that should the *Schah* condescend to grant a Decree in our Favour, we should leave a fit Person, who belong'd to us, to receive it, and proceed directly with it
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to *Petersburg* ; that we flatter'd ourselves this would be permitted us, as our Orders were to return this *Autumn*, and on no account whatsoever to winter in *Persia*, and we dare not act contrary to our Instructions, which were positive. All this we begg'd the *Vizir* to consider, and not insist on our tarrying for the Decree, which could as well come after us ; whereas should we be obliged to tarry for it, we should act contrary to positive Orders, and lose a whole Year's time.

Upon this the *Vizir* paused some time, and consulted with his Deputy *Mustapha* and others, who attended on him, and made Answer, That one of us surely might tarry, and do Honour to the *Schah's* Decree, which he was certain would arrive in a short Time, and that the other might return, and make a Report of our Affairs. We told him, that as this Proposal was intirely new, we could make no immediate Answer, but desir'd that we might have Time to consider of it, and we would return him our Answer in the Evening.

When we came home we consulted with ourselves, and finding that there was an absolute Necessity that one of us should stay, and, according to the *Persian* Expression, do Honour to the Decree by the Manner of receiving it, we resolved, that Mr. *Graham* should tarry here. On this we sent the *Vizir* Word by our Linguist, as we had promis'd, and the next Morning waited on him ourselves, and told him, that Capt. *Elton* came to take his Leave of him. After some Consultation with those about him, he ask'd, Why he would not be so kind as to tarry with them for the Decree ? Our Answer was, That if Mr. *Graham* returned, he could only
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made Report of Affairs of Trade, and could give no satisfactory Account of the *Caspian*, on which the Success of our future Designs so much depended, and to which End Mr. *Elton*, as a Seaman, was particularly sent ; and that if one of us should return, our Principals would on that Account undoubtedly expect it should be him ; and it would be but a poor Excuse to write them word that he was detain'd here against his Will. He evasively made answer, That when the *Decree* did arrive, it would be directed to Mr. *Elton*, and could be deliver'd to none else. This look'd so like Artifice to detain him, that his Design so to do was very plainly seen, that it was in vain to use many Words ; that our Reply was, We would consider of it, and give him our Answer in a few Hours. We return'd home not very well pleased, not knowing what the *Vizir's* Meaning could be in proceeding with us in this Manner, so we immediately sent for an *Armenian* or two, in whom we knew we could confide, and enquired of them concerning the *Vizir's* Conduct towards us ; they said, it was not in the *Vizir's* Power to let Mr. *Elton* return until such Time the *Decree* we had petition'd for should arrive, or at least an Answer to our Petition ; for if the *Schah* should condescend to grant us a *Decree*, the Courier that should bring it would deliver it to none but Mr. *Elton*, to whom it would most certainly be address'd ; that if the Courier could not readily find him, he would demand him of the *Vizir*, and if he could not produce him, he would carry the *Decree* back, and make his Report accordingly ; or it might happen, that an Order would be sent for Mr. *Elton* to come to

the *Schah* at *Mesched*. In either Case it would be very unlucky for the *Vizir* if he was not to be found, as Mistakes of this kind in *Persia* are seldom forgiven. Being convinced that these were the true Reasons for detaining Mr. *Elton*, made us something easier, tho' we were well assured (which gave us no little Concern) that his being obliged to winter there would be of great Prejudice to our future Designs, and would probably postpone them a Year. However, as his Stay was absolutely necessary, we waited on the *Vizir* the same Evening, and told him, since he was so desirous that Capt. *Elton* should tarry to do Honour to the *Schah's Decree*, we were content; but that if our Principals should send no Goods next Year, or should refuse to enter on the Trade on account of the Captain's being detain'd, he would not reflect on us, but take the Blame to himself; but that we hoped, that after the *Decree* was arrived the Captain should not be detain'd an Hour. He promised he would not keep him a Moment; and that if no Opportunity should then present for him to cross the *Caspian*, he would immediately dispatch him by Post, and give Mr. *Graham* a Convoy quite to the *Russian* Frontiers, all at the *Schah's* Expence. On this Mr. *Graham* took leave of the *Vizir*, and prepar'd for his Return to *Petersburg*; but on the 15th of *August* the New Governor of *Gilan* made his Entry into *Reshd*. We did not wait on him the same Day, as we knew he would not have Time to talk with us; and as it's necessary, according to Custom, to send him some Present. At the same time we heard a Courier was come from *Mesched*,
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who enquired for the *English* Merchants ; about Noon the Courier came with the *Decree* the *Schah* was pleased to grant us : We were obliged to meet him at the outer Door of our Court-Yard, when he deliver'd it, Capt. *Elton* with some Ceremony, taking it in both his Hands, touching his Forehead with it ; and the Captain was obliged to receive it in the same Manner, and do it the same Obeysance.

In the Evening our Acquaintance came to congratulate us on receiving the *Decree* ; though we believe none of them thought that we should ever obtain it. According to their Custom, we presented the Courier who brought the *Decree* with a compleat *Persian* Habit, which he wore all the Time he staid at *Reshd* in Honour of us : When our Servant deliver'd him the Habit, he forced him to accept of three Gold Ducats, which the Servant by our Order refusing, he told him he would not accept of it on any other Terms, so he was obliged to take the Money. The *Decree* translated is as followeth.

OUR high Commandment consists in this, That we have condescended to grant the underwritten Petitioners the Contents of their humble Petition. And by this be it known unto you, most excellent *Beglerbeys*, most honourable Governors and Commanders of our Empire of all *Irak* (which resembles *Paradise*) our Country of *Baulk* and its Dependencies : Whereas some honourable *English* Merchants have arriv'd here from the Empire of *Russia*, we have given them Liberty, and hereby allow them to land their Goods with all Freedom in all, or any of our Ports on the *Caspian* Sea, and from

thence to carry them to any Market in our Empire, particularly to our Provinces of *Khorasan*, *Irak*, *Farse*, *Vaussier*, *Bodshaun*, *Vized*, *Kerman*, *Baulk*, *Andikoad Shabran*, and to the Bank of the River *Ama*, and to the Confines of *Badagshan*, *Cabul*, *Caswin*, *Pstagne*, to the Empire of *India*, and the Banks of the River *Attukau*; and that they shall be permitted and indulged to pursue their Journeys with their Merchandise without the least Interruption or Disturbance, we having order'd all our Subjects to give them all reasonable Assistance. And when they have determin'd at any Port or Place to open their Goods, and expose them to Sale, they may at all times do so without Interruption, and what remains unfold they are left at Liberty to carry or transport where they please, in Vessels or in Loads; only such Duties as are customary shall be taken, and by no Means any more shall be exacted from them. If these *English* Merchants desire to buy up any Commodities of our Empire for Exportation, they shall meet with no manner of Hindrance; but they shall find the same Indulgence as any other Merchants whatsoever. When their Vessels or Goods happen to arrive at any Place, where there shall be no *English* House, or Consul, if they have no Inclination to land their Goods, no Force shall be used to oblige them to land them, or shall they on any Pretence be detain'd, paying the ordinary Duty, and taking a Receipt for the same. If it should so fall out, that they have no Money ready to pay the Duty on the Goods they shall import into any other Port than *Reshd*, then they may give their Assignment on their House at *Reshd*. If they shall have Occa-
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sion to buy or hire Vessels for the carrying of or bringing on Shore their Goods, the Commanders of our Ports are commanded to give them all manner of Assistance herein. If these Merchants desire to sell their Goods out of their own Quarters, Houses, or Warehouses, We give them full Power so to do, and let none have the Assurance to interrupt them, under Pretence their Goods have not been regularly view'd by the Custom-house Officers. But at the same time we expect, that they will not offer Goods to Sale which have not paid Duty, or been regularly view'd at our Custom-house, to the Injury of our Revenues. If the *English* Merchants desire to hire or buy Houses in *Reshd*, or any other Port or Place, in that we shall give them all reasonable Assistance; allowing, however, the Inhabitants of such Places their Liberty, none of which shall be constrain'd to part with their Houses against their Inclination; and they shall treat the *English* with all imaginable Civility and Respect.

If any of the Goods they shall import shall be thought proper for our Use by our Commissaries, such may be taken for us at the same Price they shall be sold to other People for, our Commissaries paying ready Money; and they shall not be oblig'd to part with, or deliver any Goods but for ready Money: And in such Payments let none dare to give them any Trouble, on pain of our highest Displeasure. Whatsoever Goods they shall import that shall not be thought proper for our Use, they have free Liberty to sell them to whom they please, without Hindrance or Delay, and these the *English* Merchants have

have Leave to ship off, or to carry them to what Place they choofe.

If any Differences happen in their Trade, and it come to a Trial, or Hearing, the *Commanders* of that Place are order'd to give immediate Sentence without Partiality. In whatfoever Port the *English* Merchants fhall pay their Duty, there they fhall have given them a written Discharge, in which fhall be fet forth, for what Quantity of Goods they have paid Duty, and the Amount of the faid Duty, that they may not be liable to pay Duty for them again in any Port or Place. The Customhouse Officers are not to break open or unpack their Bales, but to take the Merchant's Words for the Content of them, that they may fustain no Damage.

In whatfoever Province the *English* Merchants fhall arrive, the moft excellent *Beglerbeys*, and others, our moft honourable *Commanders*, are hereby order'd to fhew them all imaginable Refpect, nor to allow or fuffer any Perfon whatfoever to affront or moleft them.

And feeing the Petitioners are only acquainted with the *European* Language, and that they can't confer with our Subjects without an Interpreter, it is neceffary therefore that their Brokers be Men acquainted with both Languages. If then they defire fuch Interpreters, whoever they fhall chufe, even if they are Chriftians, they are at Liberty to make ufe of fuch without Reftraint.

The Petitioners are received under our moft gracious Protection, and the Watch which they fent is received ; and as a Mark of our Favour, by the Bearer hereof, we present them with Fifty Robles. And we hereby order our high trufted Treafurers and Regulators of our Empire to
register

register this our high Decree, and to put it in Execution, under Pain of our highest Displeasure. Written in the Month of *Inmadi al avul*, or the Beginning of *August*, 1152 Years.

R E S A U.
G U L L E.
M I S S A S.
S E A L.

On the 16th of *August*, in the Forenoon, we waited on the New Governor, at whose Levee we found all the principal Persons in Town, to the Number of Fifty or more, all sitting in one Room. He received us very kindly, bidding us welcome, and said he was glad that the *English* thought well to come and trade at *Gilan*; immediately Chairs were brought us to sit down. We presented him with the Decree the *Schah* had granted us, which he received very respectfully, standing up whilst he received it, and taking it in both Hands, touched his Forehead with it, which having done he sat down: This was an Honour particularly due to the Decree, and when the Governor rose to receive it the whole Company did the like. The Governor read the Decree to himself, and then gave it the *Vizir* to read, who also read it to himself. When it was return'd to us, the Governor said he would send a Writer of his to our House to copy the Decree, which Copy should remain in his Chancellery, as an authentick Copy at all times to be referr'd to; and from which other Copies would be taken and sent to the other Governments of the Empire. Supposing we had now done all our Business, we were for taking
leave

leave, when the Governor asked Capt. *Elton*, who would tarry here and take care of our Affairs? We answer'd him, that our Effects that we had then were not so considerable but that we might leave them with our Servant, who would tarry until our Return, which we hoped would be early in the Spring. He reply'd, he should think it much better that one of us should tarry, and then if the *Schah* should send to enquire of us concerning our Country, or the Nature of our Trade, one of us would be present to satisfy him in his Enquiries, which he doubted if any Servant could do. We instantly saw the Governor and the *Vizir* had had a Conference about us, and came to a Resolution to detain us both if possible, therefore we thought it to very little Purpose to use Arguments; however, we parted upon it, and consulted betwixt ourselves, on which Mr. *Graham* consented to tarry. Mean while the Governor said, that whoever of us staid behind he would do all in his Power to make *Gilan* agreeable to him. All this Time the *Vizir* and *Mustapha* were whispering with the Governor, to whom we address'd ourselves, That since it appear'd so convenient to him that one of us should tarry, tho' we must confess we could not in Pursuance of our Instructions, yet, as it was the Governor's Pleasure, we were willing to take that as a sufficient Reason, and therefore Mr. *Graham* consented to stay: He said, he would take it as a particular Favour if Capt. *Elton* would stay with them, and send Mr. *Graham* back. This so unexpected a Request a little shock'd the Captain, as knowing his wintering there would in a manner prove fatal to their Design; but as they had a Decree in their Fa-

vour,

vour, they thought they might act with more Resolution than they had done formerly in treating with the *Vizir*; so Mr. *Elton* told the Governor, he would be very willing to tarry with him, as well to comply with what he was pleas'd to request, as to save himself the Fatigue of so tedious and long a Journey, as it was from *Reshd* to *Petersburg*; but that the Necessity of their Affairs would by no Means permit him; so he begged he might be excused. But the Governor, by the *Vizir's* and *Mustapha's* Insinuations, as might be plainly seen by their Behaviour on this Occasion, still insisted on the *Captain's* tarrying, which being so unreasonable, animated him to make a short Reply, which was, That as the *Schah* having condescended to grant us a *Decree*, we had staid and done all the Honour to it we were capable of, therefore now we had nothing to do more at *Reshd* but what Mr. *Graham* could dispatch; that our principal Affairs lay now at *Petersburg*, and thither we must return this Year, or a Period might be put to this new Undertaking, and that as I was apprized of this I could never consent to tarry; that if he had any Distrust or Suspicion, then it were better that he kept us both here in Arrest until he could have an Answer from the *Persian* Ambassador, M. *Golafa* at *Petersburg*, concerning us; that the *Captain* hoped he would excuse him for saying again, that he could never consent to winter here, seeing it would inevitably be the Ruin of all their Designs, and would render the *Schah's* *Decree* in their Favour of no Effect. To which the Governor immediately reply'd, God forbid that he should detain him a Moment against his Will; that since the Necessity of our Affairs would not permit

it, he heartily wish'd him a good Journey, and that he should find at his Return, by the Reception Mr. *Graham* should meet with, the Civilities that he had intended me, could I have tarry'd with them. So the Debate ended; after which he made us several Compliments, which we endeavour'd to return. The *Vizir* and *Mustapha* look'd very much disconcerted at Mr. *Elton's* absolute Refusal to stay; their Intention being to have detain'd the *Captain*, never thinking that he would venture to carry things to such Extremity; but they were mistaken, there being a vast deal of Difference betwixt talking with a *Decree* in one's Hand, and talking when we were soliciting for one; all which they seem'd unapprized of until they found it so.

The Design of the *Vizir* and *Mustapha* in detaining the *Captain* (which may in some manner excuse them) appear'd to us in this Light.

The *Persians* are a *subtil* and *jealous* People, and on our proposing to return and not wait for the *Schah's Decree*, they concluded that we had certainly taken some Disgust at their Country, and would come no more there to trade; and that our Distaste must proceed from our not having found the Silk Trade and the Markets of *Persia* free as formerly, but in a manner all engross'd by the *Schah*. At the same time they could not but consider of what Benefit our Trade to their Country would be to them, and therefore how desirous the *Schah* would be to have us carry on a Commerce through his Dominions. Should we therefore refuse to return again to trade, it would not only be a considerable Loss to their Country, but, what more immediately concern'd them, they foresaw such a Neglect of
ours

ours might produce an Inquiry fatal to them both ; for when the *Schah* should come to find that we slighted his gracious Decree, it would not be possible for the *Vizir* and *Mustapha* to clear themselves, by saying, they were ignorant why we returned not. The *Schah* would take it for granted, that their Mismanagement was the Reason, and for a small Mistake in *Persia* a Man often pays no less a Fine than his Head ; of this both the *Vizir* and *Mustapha* had a very recent Example in the Fate of their Father. Hence it came, that the Governor and they were willing to act as secure as possible in case of Accident, and had therefore rather have detained the Captain than Mr. *Graham* ; but we have no Reason to think he had any Order from the *Schah* to detain either of us, on the Captain's insisting in the strongest Terms to depart. They thought they had gained a Point, that they had prevailed over one of us to be willing to tarry with them ; for in our Debate the Governor often said, that it was his Advice, that one of us should tarry here, and that he begg'd it as a Favour to be his Guest whilst the other returned.

Although the *Persians* are very courteous in their manner of speaking, yet these were such complaisant Expressions, that the Governor, being so great a Person, would not have condescended to have made use of, had he had any Authority from his Prince to have detain'd either of us. Likewise we knew from the Stile and Force of our Decree, that if we insisted on returning, that he could not have kept any one of us ; therefore it was only out of a Precaution, or to make a Merit of it, that they had persuaded one of us to tarry with them in *Reshd*. But as our Inten-

tions were to return there again, to prosecute the Design we first came about, so we were obliged to have a regard for the future, and not by our Obstinacy make all those in Power there, our Enemies for ever after. On this Consideration, since it was so much desired, that one of us should consent to tarry in *Persia*, we hoped it would appear to all our Friends as necessary as it did there to us. In the Afternoon we sent to the Governor for a Pass for Mr. *Elton*, and an *Armenian* Servant that attended him, which was immediately sent, on which he took Leave of the Governor, *Vizir*, *Mustapha*, and the *Coopcheen*. Mr. *Graham* and some *Armenian* Friends accompanied the Captain to *Perre Buzzar*.

On the 19th of *August*, early in the Morning, he got to *Zinzelle* Village, where the Packet-boat which belonged to the *Czarina* lay in the Road ready for us, having got over the Bar the Night before. The *Russ* Consul came on board our Smack to give her his Dispatches ; the Weather was calm and pleasant.

On the 22d of *August* we weighed, and left *Zinzelle* Road, having a light Breeze Westerly. For want of Exercise the Captain had been sadly troubled with the Scurvy ever since he left *Saratoff* (it is a reigning Distemper with the *Europeans* in those Parts of *Persia*.) Having left the Land he betook himself to his Sea Journal.

On the 17th of *September* they arrived in *Chettery Bugara* Road, where the Guard-Ship of her *Czarian Majesty* lay at the Entrance of the *Volga*. The next Day in the Afternoon he went on Shore on the Island, where the commanding Officer and a Surgeon came to view us, to see if we were free from all Symptoms of the Plague,
and

and make their Report : The Orders on which were, that we should perform a fix Weeks *Quarantine* ; but it had been a Custom of the Admiralty for a Year past, not to suffer the Empress her Servant to be detained, but to go immediately to *Astracan*, and only to keep the Passengers.

On the 4th of *October* a Smack of the *Czarina's* arrived, which was the last which came this Year. She had 200 Bales on Board belonging to *Armenians* and *Indians*, for Consumption in *Russia*, but no Silk but what belonged to us. She had been three Weeks in her Passage. Another Vessel arrived the 12th of *October*, who had winter'd the Year before at *Reshd*, but she had been the whole Summer in finding her way hither, as mentioned formerly. At *Baku* she took in some Copper, and Silk from *Shamaky*, and afterwards filled up with Wine from *Derbent*. The mentioning of these Vessels gives again Occasion to speak of the *Caspian*, which we have before intimated, is a very fair Navigation : The Northern Parts are navigable nine Months in a Year, and the Southern all the Year round. From *Cbetry Bugara* Island to *Zinzelle* is about 168 Leagues, although the whole Length of the *Caspian*. And as one Wind will serve, so it won't be esteemed a Week's Run for a full-built Vessel ; and some of the *Czarina's* Vessels, which are as full as close Lighters, have made that Passage in less than five Days. From *Cbetry Bugara* to *Astrabat* is not 190 Leagues on a plain Course, so that it may be consider'd as the same Distance as to *Zinzelle*. *Astrabat* is a Port the *Russians* have visited now and then, but never frequented, for no *Russ* Vessels what-

whatsoever at this time go any farther than *Zinzelle*, although *Astrabat* is equally as good a Road and Haven, and as great a depth of Water on its Bar as *Zinzelle*.

Reshd being the only Silk Market in *Gilan*, the *Armenians* made this City their principal Market, and this is what occasions the *Russ* Vessels which bring the *Armenians* and their Goods over from *Astracan*, all to resort to *Zinzelle*, which is the Sea Port of *Reshd*. *Zinzelle* and *Astrabat* are the only Ports the *British* Vessels will be under a Necessity of frequenting on the *Persian* Side, and they happen to be two of the best Havens on all the *Caspian*, they being but a Week's Run, although ordinarily a Fortnight from *Astracan*. When the *English* Merchants come to be possess'd of Vessels of their own, they may manage the Trade to and from *Persia* as they find most to their Advantage ; at present we will suppose the following manner.

All Goods designed for *Zinzelle* or *Astrabat* must be forwarded from *Petersburg* by the beginning of *February*, that they may arrive at *Saratoff* on the *Volga* about the end of that Month, at which Time the *Volga* is there open, and about the Beginning of *April* these Goods may probably arrive at *Astracan*, or at *Chettery Bugara* ; if a proper Vessel lay ready to take them in, they may very well arrive at *Zinzelle* or *Astrabat* before *May*. These Goods may be sold at *Reshd* or *Mesched* by the middle of *July*, and by the middle of *August* the Returns may be invested in Silk, the Product of the same Year ; this Silk may be shipp'd off before the end of *August*, at *Zinzelle* ; and if the Vessel that takes them in sails directly, then before the end of

Sep-

September they may arrive at *Astracan* ; in *October* they may reach *Saratoff*, from thence by Sledge-way, and arrive at *Petersburg* the beginning of *January*.

This is supposing no *Quarentine* is required on Goods coming from *Gilan* ; but if such Goods are required to perform a three Months *Quarentine*, then they will arrive three Months later in *Petersburg*, that is, about the 1st of *April* ; this is Time enough to be shipp'd off by the first Ships that sail that Year for *London*; nay altho' it were the middle of *May*, it is sooner than the Ice is out of the River *Neva* ; and had these Goods arrived even in *December*, they must have remained for the same Ships, so in this Case the *Quarentine* seems to be no hinderance. But the above State of the Case supposes that Goods sent to *Persia* meet with an immediate Market, and that their Returns can be as immediately invested in Silk, both which may not happen, and then the *Quarentine* would be of a very great Disadvantage. As for Example, Goods arriving in *Gilan* in *May*, perhaps shan't be sold till the *January* following ; and then the Returns of those Goods in Silks can't be shipp'd from *Zinzelle* till the beginning of *March*, and arrive about the latter End at *Astracan* ; and by reason of the *Quarentine* they can't be forwarded from thence until the end of *June* ; at *Saratoff* they can't arrive before *August*, nor in *Petersburg* before the end of *September* ; although this is Time enough to be shipt off for *London*; but the Returns from thence can't be made until the next ensuing Spring ; so that the Opportunity of sending these Goods time enough to arrive by the Winter-way at *Saratoff* is lost, by being four Months

Months too late at *Petersburg*. What may be done by way of *Riga* in Importations or Exportations, we have not yet had any Experience of.

The *Quarentine*, whilst it continues, necessitates us to sell our Goods that we import into *Gilan*, within the Space of two Months, or else we can't make our Returns to and from *Gilan* to *London* in less than three Years. Did no *Quarentine* interfere they might be made in two, and the Merchants have eight Months time to dispose of their Goods; so that the Continuation of the *Quarentine* on Goods coming from *Gilan* make a surprising Difference, the Profit being so much lessened thereby, that all Means must be used to get that removed; and it is likewise the Interest of the *Czarina* to have it done on account of the Encouragement it will give to us to carry on the Trade largely and with Dispatch, whereby her Customs, &c. will increase in Proportion.

It is to be observed, that the Northern Provinces in *Persia* which produce the most and best sort of Raw Silk (from whence the Southern Provinces, and the Silk Manufacturies at *Mesched* are supply'd, besides the great Quantity that goes to *Turky*) are three; as *Gilan*, the chief City is *Reshd*; *Sherman*, whose chief City is *Shamaky*; *Arrash*, whose chief City is *Ganges*. The two former of these Provinces are on the South-west Shoar of the *Caspian*, and the latter is adjacent to them, not far from the *Caspian*; that they could not hear that any *English* woollen Goods, either from the *India* Company, or the *Turky*, ever reached *Mesched*, but only *Holland* woollen Cloths brought by the *Armenians*; whereas a Trade to that Place with our woollen Cloth might,

might, in a short Time, be the most considerable Branch of the *English* woolen Trade ; nor is it unlikely that we may come to cloath the *Schah's* Armies, which are numerous, as we can bring it much cheaper than any other Nation, and afford to give more for their Raw Silk, &c. Besides we can send Lead, Pewter, Bar-Tin, which the *Persians* are now supply'd with from the *India* and *Turky* Company's Settlements.

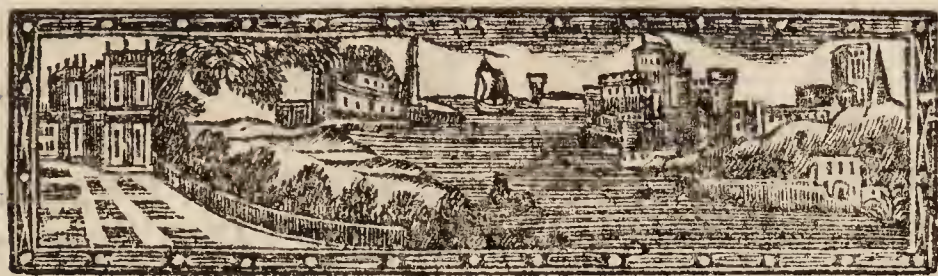
The *Persians* and *Armenians*, in the Delivery of their Cloth, reckon ten *Russ* Arsheens to make seven *Persian*, which is as 1 to 1.428, accounting the *Persian* Arsheen $\frac{25}{1000}$ greater than we found it with regard to the *Russian*, or 2l. 6s. per Cent.

In their Bills of Exchange the *Armenians* reckon *Persian* Money to be 30 per Cent. better than *Russ* Money ; so that for 100 Rubles *Russ* Money paid in *Astracan*, they pass their Bills payable in *Gilan* but for 70 Rubles *Persian* Money.

A *Persian* * Zolotnick is $\frac{11}{12}$ of a *Russ* Zolotnick ; a *Persian* common Batman contains 1280 *Persian* Zolotnicks, or 14 Pounds, *Russ* 5454 ; a *Persian* Silk Batman contains 1200 ditto, or 13 Pounds, 6363 ; so that three Silk Batman weigh 40 Pounds, 9029 *Russ*. We found a *Persian Schah's* Arsheen to be 39.4 *English* Inches, so that a *Russ* Arsheen is to a *Persian* as 1 to 1.402.

Hence, if the *Persian* Ruble be 30 per Cent. better than the *Russ* Ruble, the *Persian* Arsheen exceeds the *Russ* Arsheen 42.85 per Cent. according to the *Armenians*.

* 96 *Russ* Zolotnicks to an Ounce Troy Weight.



SOME
 ACCOUNT
 OF THE
Rise and Successes
 OF
 THAMAS KOULI KAN,
 KING of PERSIA.



CHAH *Thamas*, who was then called the Prince, had, after seven Years Misfortune, got together an Army of about 30,000 good Soldiers out of the Northern Provinces, under a very good General (*a*) *Thamas Kan*, who in June 1729 defeated the (*b*) *Ab-*

(*a*) Now the famous *Schah Nadir*, or *Kouli Kan*.

(*b*) A People that join'd the *Osgoons* to conquer *Persia*, under *Meer Mahomet*, the Son of *Meer Wise*.

dalles intirely in several set Battles, and took their chief City *Hyraut*, which lies to the North of *Persia*. This News soon reached *Ispahan*, and being greatly exaggerated according to the particular Custom of *Persia*, as also the Number of the *Kan's* Forces, so alarmed (c) *Horroff*, who was then in Possession of *Ispahan*, a Man of known Bravery, that he very imprudently took a Resolution to go in quest of the Prince before he should grow too strong (who then had no Thoughts of turning his Force that way until the next Spring.) Accordingly *Horroff*, in the beginning of *August*, set out with an Army of 35,000 Men, composed of *Ofgoots*, and (d) *Dongazances*, and in twenty-five Days march met and engaged the Prince's Forces, who so intirely routed him, that he flew back to *Ispahan* in half the Time.

This happy and unexpected Event determined the Prince to pursue this Victory, and to send his General with his Forces to provoke him to another Engagement. *Horroff* thought it best for him to try his Fortune in the Field, but being dubious of the Event, before he left the City, he packed up all the Royal Treasury and Jewels, ready to carry with him in case he should be routed, and at the same Time massacred all the principal Inhabitants he could find, to the Number of 2800. The (e) *English* and *Dutch* Agents he ordered to come into the new Walls the *Ofgoots* built at the first taking the

(c) A Kinsman and Successor of *Meer Mahomet*, who took *Ispahan*.

(d) A Nation that joined the *Ofgoots*, after they revolted, and set up for themselves.

(e) Mr. *Cockell* was then the *English* Agent.

City,

City, and put them into the (f) *Caravansera Shaw*, in the *Kyserce*, under a Guard.

1729. The next Battle was on the 2d of *November*, in the Morning, in which he had no better Fortune than in the former; the News of which was at *Ispahan* at Noon, though at Forty Miles distance. He, with some few scattered Forces, did not arrive till Night, and going to his Palace he sat himself down in his (g) *Chebil-sitoon*, very much dejected; the *Naib*, or Prime Minister came to him, and ask'd him what he did there, that the *Persians* were at the City Gates; upon which he loaded his Treasury, and that Part of his (b) *Haram* which he designed to take with him, and fled in such a precipitate manner, that he never thought of the *English* and *Dutch* Merchants, to their great Joy. This Opportunity they would not slip, having before bribed the Guard to be in the greater Readiness to embrace a favourable Opportunity; they slipped away early in the Morning, Sword in Hand, to the Company's House. At Noon the City was all in an Uproar; what *Persians* were hid, and in the adjacent Places, came in great Numbers to plunder; and it was at the risque of their Lives they saved the Company's House.

Schah Thomas's General did not arrive till three Days after, and had he only sent 6000 Men after the *Osgoons*, he had intirely destroy'd them. *Horroff*, after he had gone two or three Leagues, and saw no one coming after him, sent back his *Athama Doulet* (or Prime Minister) with a Par-

(f) A Royal Inn near his Palace.

(g) A Hall belonging to his Palace, called so from having 40 Pillars in it.

(b) His Women.

ty to massacre as many as he could, and fire the City : But just as he got to the Royal Gardens, a Mile from the City, somebody amongst the Mobile wiser than the rest, rightly thinking that they came with no good Design, order'd the Drums to be beat, which threw them into such a Pannick, that they were glad to make the best of their way back, imagining that the Prince's Forces had taken Possession of the Town.

Horroff's first Design was to go to (i) *Carmania*, but after five or six Days march, hearing that Road was made impassable, went to *Shirass*, a large City (about 200 Miles from *Ispahan*, and 30 from old *Persepolis*, in the Road to *Gombroon*) but in such a Fright, that they dropt great Numbers of their Women and Children on the Road, which the *Persians*, as they met with, killed. On his Arrival at *Shirass* he burnt the City, put the Inhabitants to the Sword, and took Possession of the Castles.

In the mean Time *Schah Thamas*, instead of pursuing the *Ofgoons* remained two Months in *Ispahan*, levying of Money in a very rigorous manner to satisfy his greedy Soldiers, which made almost every one repent of the Change. However, about the latter end of *December* he went after *Horroff*; they met near *Shirass*, where, after an obstinate Battle, *Horroff* was entirely defeated, but he himself escaped with his Treasure, and about 2000 *Ofgoons*, and took their Rout to the *Bamouchees*, a People that live chiefly on Robberies. At last he was killed by a Party of the *Hosseem Caus*, who immediately after rendered

(i) A Province where the Wool of that Name comes from, about 400 Miles from *Ispahan*.

their Obedience to *Schah Thamas*, who fleeced the Inhabitants of *Skirafs* of every thing the *Osgoons* had left them ; from thence he continu'd his March to *Hamadon*, near which Place he defeated a Party of the *Turks*.

The *Schah* on his Return to *Ispahan* made *Thamas Kan* his *Vachert Doulet*, the greatest Post a Subject can enjoy, he having the sole Administration of Affairs, and gave him his Seal : On which he carried it with so high a Hand, that it was soon seen that he had the Crown in view, and that the King began to be heartily tired of him, as well as every body else, for he had assum'd an unlimited Power ; but as he was engaged in a vigorous War against the *Turks*, the *Schah* was afraid to send for his Head. To such an Height did this Man raise himself, chiefly by his undaunted Courage ; for it was not ten Years past, that he was only a Camel-man in the Province of *Corasan*, where he was born ; to which Place he sent a prodigious Treasure with the *Schah's* Sister's Aunt, whom he had given him to Wife, and one of the *Schah's* Sisters, whom he had sent for a Wife for his Son. Had the *Kan's* Designs against the *Turks* prov'd unsuccessful, it was everybody's Opinion he must have gone over to them with what Forces he could have prevail'd upon to follow him, he having so utterly ruin'd and destroy'd every Place he pass'd thro', that nobody would have been able to make head against him.

All this Time the *Russians* were Masters of the Province of *Gilan*, and used all the Inhabitants so well, that they had no other Concern but the Fear that it should fall under the *Persian* Government again.

Persia being in this distracted Condition, the *English* Merchants endeavour'd all they were able to repair to *Gambroon*; but after using their utmost Efforts found it impracticable, and the more so from the Villainy of one *Stephen*, their Linguist; who during the late Revolution, when the *Osgoons* had the Government, imagining that they could do nothing without him, obliged them to chuse one *Hemet* in his Place, which provoked him to do them all the ill Offices in his Power.

The *Dutch*, during the Siege, before the *Osgoons* took the City, got prodigious Riches by the Sale of a vast Quantity of Sugar for Money and Jewels, for which *Schah Mahomed* imprison'd and fined them very extraordinarily; yet they made a considerable Figure, tho' they pretended to be poor. The *Armenians* put many of their Effects under the Protection of the *Dutch*, which were most of them discover'd and seiz'd: And what with Losses they had by Sea, and none of their Factors returning from *India*, and others not return'd from other Parts, it was reckoned their Women exceeded them twenty to one in number. *Horroff* enquir'd much after the King's Mother, but could never hear of her; she was kept privately alive by the old *Eunuch* in the *Haram* like a Servant.

Now let us turn our Eye to *Thamas Kan*. After he had beat the *Osgoons* at *Skirass*, he went against the *Turks*, whom he defeated in several set Battles, and retook * *Ahmadoon* and *Tabreez*: When the *Abdallers*, join'd with the *Osgoons*, seiz'd upon *Hyrant*, upon which he left the King in *Ispahan* without any Forces, taking all
along

* A large City on the Road to *Babylon*, and about nine Days Journey from *Ispahan*.

along with him to attack the *Turks*, whom he intirely defeated in a set Battle, and retook the City of *Hyraut*. In the mean time *Schah Thamas* got together, as well as he could, an indifferent Army, left *Ispahan* in *October* and retook two Castles from the *Ofgoons*, and encreased his Army in his March in the Depth of a severe Winter to *Tabreez*, and in the Spring to *Errivan*, where he engaged and routed a large Body of *Turks* and besieged the Castle; but the Country thereabouts being quite ruin'd and unable to furnish him with Provisions, he was forced to come back to *Tabreez* to give his Horses Grass, having narrowly escap'd being taken himself as he was endeavouring to cut off a Convoy of Provisions going to the Relief of the *Tartars*. However, soon after *Ashmud*, *Basbaw* of *Babylon*, defeated *Schah Thamas*, took all his Baggage, and 80 Pieces of Cannon; the King fled to *Koom*, a large City, to stay until he could get his straggling Forces together. The News of this gave them the utmost Consternation at *Ispahan*, that every one was packing up what they esteem'd most valuable, ready to fly; which the *English* would have done as well as the rest, if the King had not as soon as he lost the Battle, sent a Party of Troops to keep the City in order, and forbid on pain of Death, any body's leaving it. All their Dependence for Safety was on *Thamas Kan*, who immediately after he had reduced the Castle of *Hyraut*, march'd to the King's Assistance with a good Army. But their greatest Security was the approaching Winter, for the *Persians* had no Forces between *Ispahan* and *Ashmadoon*; so that had the *Turks* pursued their Victory, they

might easily have taken the City; for the Governor expected no less, having design'd on their Approach to have evacuated and set it on Fire. The King's *Haram* (or Women) were removed to *Corbin*.

In *August*, 1732, *Thamas Kan* seized the King, and sent him a Prisoner under a strong Guard to *Mushatt*, setting on the Throne *Schah Abbass* the Third, a Child of three Months old. To keep his Army true and faithful to him, it is not to be described how he drain'd and oppress'd all *Persia*; how miserable and desolate it was at this Time: However he was defeated in two Skirmishes he had with the *Turks*, the first of which he fought in *Schah Abbass* the Third's Name, the second in his own Name; but in the third, for a Tryal of Fortune, he fought in the Name of *Schah Thamas*, in which he got the better. So superstitious are the *Persians*, that on this Turn of Success he sent for *Schah Thamas* again, with a Pretence to re-instate him, after he had taken a solemn Oath to forgive all that was past. But it was only to give him the Title of King; for he had a Notion that Fortune would continue her Favours to him fighting under his Name, at the same time keeping the exorbitant Power he was possessed of in his own Hands for his Security. How he afterwards assum'd the Throne, with his Expedition into *India*, and other Successes and various Events of his Life, we refer to Mr. *Frazer's* ingenious History of him, just publish'd.

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